



MEDIA STATEMENT

MAY 8, 2025

Ordination and installation of 11th Bishop of Armidale

Saints Mary and Joseph's Cathedral in Armidale was filled on the evening of Thursday 8th May for a joyful celebration of the ordination and installation of Bishop Peter Murphy as the 11th bishop of the Diocese of Armidale.

The solemn and historic liturgy was attended by 29 bishops, including principal consecrator Archbishop of Sydney Anthony Fisher OP, who also delivered the homily.

Co-consecrators were Bishop Mark Edwards (Bishop of Wagga Wagga) and Bishop Michael Kennedy (Bishop of Maitland-Newcastle and former Bishop of Armidale).

Sixty diocesan and visiting clergy concelebrated the Mass, joined in unity by local ministers from the Anglican, Uniting, and Presbyterian churches, reflecting a strong spirit of ecumenical goodwill.

The Cathedral overflowed with faithful from across the Dioceses of Armidale, Wagga Wagga and beyond, with many more participating via livestream provided by the Diocese of Armidale.

Bishop Murphy will oversee 24 parishes, 24 Catholic schools and 40 clergy.

Prior to his appointment by the late Pope Francis, Bishop Murphy was parish administrator of St Michael's Cathedral, Wagga Wagga, and Vicar General of the Diocese of Wagga Wagga. His appointment has been warmly welcomed both locally and nationally.

He began his working life as a field agronomist in Melbourne before entering the seminary.

Being a shepherd, he said, is in his blood.

"I am a farmer's son and I worked in agriculture before being called to the priesthood, so I can talk the talk and walk the walk," Bishop Murphy said.

"I have shorn a sheep and driven a tractor, and I know how crops work, so I can be a good shepherd and find some stray sheep and bring them back."

Bishop Murphy was the last Australian bishop to be appointed by the late Pope Francis, who he saw as a role model.

“I hope to live out his legacy of caring for the poor and the marginalised,” Bishop Murphy said.

The new bishop graduated with a bachelor’s degree in philosophy from the Angelicum and a licentiate in theology from the Urban University in Rome.

Following postgraduate studies, he was ordained priest on July 11, 1992, at St Michael’s Cathedral, Wagga Wagga.

His first pastoral appointment was to Our Lady of Fatima parish, South Wagga.

He then moved to Vianney College as vice rector of the diocesan seminary, where he has taught philosophy and moral theology for 30 years, in addition to being a visiting lecturer for the John Paul II Institute on Marriage and the Family.

While completing his doctoral studies in theology in Rome, he worked as an official at the Congregation of the Missions for two years.

Over his 32 years of priesthood, he was a parish priest in three towns: Lockhart, Tumbarumba and Lavington.

Australian Catholic Bishops Conference President, Archbishop Timothy Costelloe SDB, warmly welcomed the new bishop.

“I am confident Bishop Murphy will bring gifts of great value to not only the Diocese of Armidale, but also the Australian Catholic Bishops Conference,” Archbishop Costelloe said.

“He can be assured of our prayerful support as he takes on his new leadership role.”

The Diocese of Armidale gives thanks for this grace-filled occasion and invites continued prayers for Bishop Murphy as he begins his episcopal ministry among the people of the New England and Northwest regions of New South Wales.

ENDS