



DECREE OF THE DIOCESAN BISHOP

97/2024

Decree – Provision

Appointment to Ecclesiastical Office of Parish Priest in the Parishes of St Benedict's Inner Newcastle, and St Peter-in-Chains Parish Stockton, and St Columba's Parish Mayfield, Diocese of Maitland-Newcastle

Dear Fr Gregory Barker,

As per our discussion, I appoint you to the Parishes of St Benedict's Inner Newcastle, and St Peter-in-Chains Parish Stockton, and St Columba's Parish Mayfield as Parish Priest (CIC83 c.565). Your appointment is for six years from **01 January 2025** until **01 January 2031**. This is in addition to your other current appointment as Vicar General.

Father, given that this is a changed situation, I am strongly recommending that the current Pastoral Councils, Pastoral/Leadership Teams, and Finance Councils be reconstituted. Some form of thank you for the current members would be appropriate. Then a review of the statutes for each group to bring them in line with the 1992 Diocesan Pastoral Plan. My office can assist in this task. Then new elections/appointments according to the new statutes. I would also strongly advise that you have one Pastoral Council and one Finance Council for all the parishes you are responsible for. Local operation teams are appropriate.

I draw your attention to Chapter VI of the Latin Code of Canon law, especially canons 528-537, which deal with the responsibilities of a Parish Priest.

This appointment also grants you permission to exercise faculties obtained at ordination, faculties obtained by holding the ecclesiastical office of Pastor, and other diocesan faculties. These faculties are able to be exercised in the territory of the respective parish(es).

Please make yourself aware of the diocesan Particular Law and follow the directions in such laws with particular care. A copy of the faculties and a full list of diocesan particular law instructions can be found at this link: [DoMN - Particular Law](#). This site continues to be updated so please check it regularly.

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The Bishop's Office will inform the following of your appointment (if relevant to do so) and make any necessary changes:

1. Registrar of Births, Deaths, and Marriages
2. Legal and Governance (*ACNC Charity Register*)
3. The Official Directory of the Catholic Church of Australia
4. Catholic Community Fund (*CCF*)
5. Maitland Clergy Central Fund (*MCCF*)
6. Australian Catholic Migrant & Refugee Office/or Department of Home Affairs, if relevant
7. Clergy in the Parish/es you are Departing, if relevant
8. Clergy in Parish/es of Appointment, if relevant
9. Principals of local Parish Primary Schools and local Catholic High Schools
10. Managers of CatholicCare local offices
11. St Nicholas Early Education, Nominated Supervisors of OOSH and Trainers of Pathways local centres
12. Parish Support Workers
13. Bishop's Office (*Website*)
14. Communications Team (*Intranet*)
15. People and Culture (*MN People*)
16. Information Management Team (*Padre*)
17. Technology Services (*IT Support*).

I wish to remind you of your obligation to celebrate the Latin Rite liturgies in accord with the Latin Rite liturgical texts for your parishioners. Extraneous customs or elements from other Rites or cultures serve only to create confusion in liturgy.

As you are aware these appointments are not intended to create an employment relationship. The appointments and your acceptance of them is part of your religious and spiritual service to the Church, in this Diocese, in collaboration with myself.

You will need to take the **Oath of Office** and the **Profession of Faith** which you may do before any priest in good standing. The documents accompany this decree.

The diocese is committed to safeguarding children and vulnerable adults. It is a requirement that you comply with all civil and ecclesiastical laws and instructions in relation to safeguarding. To demonstrate this you are required to sign the **Diocesan Safeguarding Commitment Statement**. The document accompanies this decree.

I ask that you please send my office signed copies of:

- a Letter of Acceptance
- the Oath of Office and the Profession of Faith (CIC . 1283)
- the Diocesan Safeguarding Commitment Statement (NSW Child Safe Standards Std.1).

Our diocese has developed an Ongoing Professional Development Process (the Process):

[Parish Leaders Professional Support](#).

This process includes professional supervision, ongoing formation, and 360 reviews aligned to the Parish Pastoral Plan. Your acceptance of this office includes your commitment to participate in The Process.

You will be given access to a list of professional supervisors and are to register your sessions in MN-People.

You are expected to revisit the Parish Pastoral Plan with your parishioners within the first twelve months of this appointment. A personal review will occur at year three and a parish review at year five. The Chancellor will contact you in the first months of your appointment to offer any assistance needed.

To access Professional Development resources please see the following link on the Diocesan Website:

[Professional Development Resources](#).

At the end of your term of office, your participation in The Process will be taken into account before another appointment is made.

The Maitland Clergy Central Fund (MCCF) oversees and is responsible for your sustentation and so I refer you to the Funds Statutes and Regulations (CIC c. 1274). Please make yourself aware of your rights and responsibilities by obtaining and reading a copy of these statutes and regulations. Please contact the MCCF Chairperson if you have any enquiries.

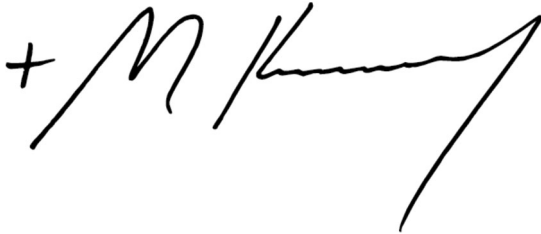
Canon 1283 of the Latin Code of Canon law also requires the Parish Priest who has administration responsibilities to prepare and sign an accurate and clear inventory of immovable property, movable objects, whether precious or of some cultural value, or other goods, with their description and appraisal; any inventory already done is to be reviewed by you and signed-off within six months of these appointments and a copy provided to my Office. If an inventory does not exist, you are dispensed from this requirement. However, within the first twelve months of your appointment you must fulfil the canonical requirement of creating an inventory.

Fr Gregory, **I seek your written acceptance** of the appointment to this ecclesiastical office, and associated obligations, **within 14 days** of receiving this letter.

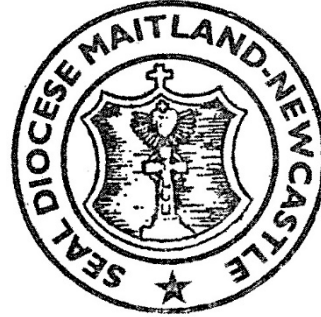
I wish you all the best in your ministry.



Given at Hamilton, NSW on the 18th day of December 2024.



Most Reverend Michael Kennedy
Bishop of Maitland-Newcastle



Reverend Matthew Muller
Chancellor

+MK/az

enc: Documents: Oath of Office; Profession of Faith; Safeguarding Commitment Statement
cc: Rev John Lovell, Parish Priest
Rev Anthony Coloma, Assistant Priest
Rev Anil Kuchipudi, Assistant Priest
Rev Solomon Okovido, Assistant Priest
Rev Deacon Kevin Gadd, Parish Deacon
Nichola McCarthy and Mary-Anne DeLuca, Pastoral Support Workers

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