



Catholic Diocese of Sandhurst

MEDIA RELEASE

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Led by the Holy Spirit: Bishop René RCJ shares his vision for the Diocese of Sandhurst

As Bishop René Ramirez RCJ began his ministry as the ninth Bishop of Sandhurst, his first message to the people of the Diocese was one of gratitude, hope and an invitation to be led by the Holy Spirit. Speaking during his installation Mass at Sacred Heart Cathedral before a congregation of approximately 1100 people, Bishop René RCJ reflected on his story becoming part of the Sandhurst story that began more than 150 years ago.

"Today I bring my story into the story of this Diocese – a story that has been unfolding for more than 150 years, written through the faith of generations, the ministry of clergy and religious, the witness of families, and the quiet service of many whose names may be known only to God."

Having previously ministered in the Diocese, Bishop René RCJ said he had already experienced the faith, generosity and resilience of the people of Sandhurst.

"Much has been done and much continues to be done. I come with gratitude for what I have inherited and with respect for those who have carried the Church's mission through changing and sometimes difficult circumstances."

Rather than presenting a strategic plan, Bishop René spoke of a way of discerning the future together, one that begins by listening to the Holy Spirit.

"Together, I hope we can build upon these foundations and become ever more deeply centred on Jesus Christ."

"The Holy Spirit is so present and active among us. We want to listen more attentively – in prayer and Scripture, through the wisdom of the Church, and in the lives of our people. Instead of preparing our plans and then asking the Holy Spirit to approve them, let us allow him to guide us from the beginning. Any genuine renewal of this Diocese will come through his power, not through our efforts alone."

Drawing on the Gospel of the Mass [Matthew 9:35-38], and Jesus' compassion, Bishop René RCJ reminded the faithful that the Church's mission is to lead people to an encounter with Christ through lives of mercy, service and hope. He spoke of parishes becoming ever more missionary and relational, places where families are supported, young people are formed as disciples, and every person is encouraged to discover and use the gifts the Holy Spirit has given them.



Recognising that this renewal belongs to the whole Church, Bishop René invited every member of the Diocese to take part.

"I ask you to share in this vision; a Diocese led by the Holy Spirit, centred on Christ, committed to evangelisation and strengthened by prayerful and courageous leadership. Let us give this mission of zeal and mercy a chance to take deeper root among us."

As he begins his episcopal ministry, Bishop René RCJ asks the people of Sandhurst for their prayers, patience and honesty, promising to walk alongside them as together they seek to follow where the Holy Spirit leads.

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