

**Remarks by Rt Rev Paul Swarbrick, Bishop of Lancaster
at the conclusion of his Episcopal Ordination & Installation**

**St Peter's Cathedral, Lancaster
Monday 9 April 2018**



**Address to particular guests and all present.
Thank you for being here to share this occasion.**

The waiting is over. The prayers of the Diocese have been answered. Here I am before you, the seventh Bishop of Lancaster - a victim of prayer - but a willing victim!

I wish to express my gratitude and appreciation for your presence here today for this wonderful occasion; a beautiful liturgy on a beautiful spring day. People from every parish in the Diocese, Cardinal Nichols, Archbishop Adams the Papal Nuncio, Archbishop McMahon our Metropolitan. My brother bishops, priests, religious and lay faithful. I appreciate the presence of representatives from the various denominations and faith communities. I look forward to getting to know you better, and working with you. I am grateful for the attendance of the Lord Lieutenant representing Her Majesty the Queen and those representing various civic bodies.

We have witnessed a hugely important moment in the life of our Diocese of Lancaster - but not exclusively so. The Church exists with a mission for and in the world. That mission invites Her to form solid relationships with others for the benefit of all. I look forward to building on so much good work already up and running especially in the fields of community cohesion, care of the needy, education, good citizenship in the days ahead.

In my Welcome (in the booklet) I mentioned continuity. Preaching the Gospel – Good News. The Lord is Risen! Alleluia! I am conscious of

inheritance - that trust that in turn we pass on to another. It is appropriate to shift the attention to **Bishop Campbell, Emeritus Bishop of Lancaster**.

Bishop Campbell can now retire after his nine years as Bishop. He has tried to go without drawing attention to himself, without any fuss. The Zambians have a proverb that says: *‘the slave is thanked only when he has sneaked away.’* I would like to show our appreciation for the work done by Bishop Campbell before he *‘sneaks away’* into retirement. He has completed his mandate. When he says his night prayers tonight he can be happy to repeat the words of the *Nunc dimittis*:
‘At last all powerful Master you give leave to your servant...’

On a personal note, I wish to thank Bishop Campbell for his example, his kindness and generosity to me particularly since the announcement of my appointment. On behalf of the Diocese, I wish to thank you for the years you have served as our Bishop and we pray that the Lord will bless you with health and happiness in the days to come. May you sleep well and wake up happy!

I’m still trying come to terms with what has happened, and probably will be for a long time to come. I could mention many people who have played significant roles along the way but will limit myself to just three. Obviously **my parents Vincent and Alice Swarbrick** must be mentioned. Dad told the story of how, as a young lad, he was an altar server and must have impressed the Parish Priest, Canon O’Dwyer with his efficiency and reliability. One day the Canon said to him “Vincent, one day you’ll be a Bishop!” I think that must have been the moment Dad set his heart on marriage. Of this occasion, I can hear my father saying – “It’s one thing to be given a job; it’s another to do it! The first step is to actually turn up!” If Mum was here today I’m sure she would have repeated words she used whenever any of us were embarking on some new adventure “Oh Paul, do be careful.” Probably the wisest advice for my present circumstances.

The third individual I must mention is our old P.P. at Garstang, **Father Jack Conway**. He noticed I was not an altar server, and that I was not involved in any extra parish activities even though I was a regular at Mass and Benediction with the rest of the family. He expressed grave concern when my parents decided to send me to Lancaster Royal Grammar School. He told my parents: “You’ll have to watch that boy....”

Finally, before we conclude the Mass and move on, I'd like us to take a moment to be quiet. Each of us here has things going on in our lives, perhaps a mix of joys and sorrows. It's easy on such an occasion to be thinking about what comes next, how long left and so on. But let's take a moment of quiet to know that the Lord is with us, is there for us, and hasn't overlooked us. He loves us and will always be there for us, as he was for **Blessed Mary, the lowly handmaid**. When asked to do something she had not had in mind she accepted generously even though she was deeply disturbed. It was an act of trust, sacrifice and love. 'Be it done unto me according to thy word', Why? Because 'the almighty has worked marvels for me.' Do not be afraid. Whatever it is that frightens you, He knows and says, *'Do not be afraid. Trust in me.'*

+Paul Swarbrick
Bishop of Lancaster

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