



## CATHOLIC DIOCESE OF SALE

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Media Release

27<sup>th</sup> June 2020

### Diocese of Sale welcomes the appointment of Bishop-Elect Greg Bennet

Diocesan Administrator Father Peter Slater has happily welcomed the appointment Monsignor Greg Bennet, a priest of the Archdiocese of Melbourne, as the 10th Bishop of Sale by Pope Francis.

“I welcome the announcement of Monsignor Greg Bennet as next Bishop of Sale.

“I am sure the people, religious, priests and agencies of the Diocese will be glad to make him welcome when he comes among us,” Fr Peter Slater said.

Fr Peter noted the announcement also comes on the Feast Day of the Patroness of the Diocese, Our Lady of Perpetual Help, 27 June.

In accepting this appointment, Bishop-Elect Bennet said he was ‘humbled’ by Pope Francis’ nomination to be the next Bishop of Sale.

“It is an enormous responsibility and privilege to be asked to undertake this appointment. It is a responsibility which cannot be exercised in isolation, but in close cooperation with the clergy, the faithful and those in Diocesan leadership,” he said.

Bishop-Elect Bennet said he looks forward to being among the people of Sale, working with the clergy and the faithful.

“I know that I come to Sale as a stranger, but I pray that we shall grow together as brothers and sisters in the Lord.

“I pray the Patroness of the Diocese, Our Lady of Perpetual Help will guide us as we build on the rich legacy of the Catholic faith in Sale and as we work together for the Reign of God.

“The warmth of welcome has already been extended and such kindness is a reflection of the living Word of God. I know of the majestic beauty of the Diocese, and am mindful of the tragedy of the fires of last summer and the enduring suffering of many.

“The Diocese has clearly responded with great care, compassion and charity to those who have lived through such a traumatic experience and now begin to reorient their lives: These efforts will have my full support,” he said.

Bishop-Elect Bennet is currently the parish priest of St Joseph’s, West Brunswick. He has held several leadership positions within the Archdiocese of Melbourne, including as director of Ministry to Priests and later as inaugural director of the Office for Evangelisation. After additional parish ministry, he served as vicar general from 2012 to 2019.

Bishop-Elect Bennet was born in April 1963, the is the second of four children to Len (RIP) and Maureen Bennet. He was raised in Melbourne, completing his secondary education at Braemar College in Woodend, northwest of Melbourne. After working in banking for several years, he entered Corpus Christi College in 1986 and was ordained priest in 1992.

Following a number of parish appointments, Bishop-Elect Bennet undertook postgraduate study, gaining a master of science in pastoral counselling from Loyola College in Baltimore and a licentiate in sacred theology from the Angelicum University in Rome.

Bishop-Elect Bennet's appointment follows the recent departure from Sale of Bishop Patrick O'Regan who was installed as Archbishop of Adelaide last month.

"Following Archbishop Patrick O'Regan is an honour. He is a gifted pastor who embraced the Diocese of Sale with respect, openness and committed leadership," he said.

Bishop-Elect Bennet particularly acknowledged Archbishop Patrick O'Regan personal engagement in Plenary Council process and his leadership in education having implemented a new governance model for Catholic Education in the Diocese.

Bishop-Elect Bennet thanked Father Peter Slater who has again served as Diocesan Administrator, "his excellent priestly leadership has been pivotal in this period of transition, especially in light of the challenges of this COVID-19 time."

Expressing his sadness in leaving his parish and the Archdiocese of Melbourne acknowledging the support he has received during his 28 years of service Bishop-Elect Bennet said he was grateful for the many people who have formed, nurtured, cared, and supported him throughout his formation and ministry.

In preparing to take on the new ministry Bishop-Elect Bennet said he promised to commit himself to Sale and to make his home amongst God's people.

"There is such diversity in Sale with the vast growth corridor to the West and vibrant local parish communities reaching from the coast to the High Country – I am excited by the pastoral opportunities which exist and which are yet to be imagined.

"While there is trepidation on my behalf, I know the God of Promise will accompany all of us on the journey ahead. I ask you to pray for me, as I will for you," he concluded.

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Local media enquiries: Liz Roberts, Digital Media Manager, mobile 0477 009 350.

### *About Bishop-Elect Greg Bennet*

*Bishop-Elect Gregory Charles Bennet was born in April 1963 is the second of four children to Len (RIP) and Maureen Bennet. He was educated in Victoria commencing at St Dominic's East Camberwell and All Hallows, Balwyn. He attended Marcellin College for one year, and in 1980 completed his secondary education at Braemar College, Woodend. Upon the completion of Year 12, he worked for a number of years in banking and undertook part-time studies in Public Administration.*

*In 1986 he entered Corpus Christi College and was ordained as a priest for the Archdiocese of Melbourne in August 1992. He has served as Assistant Priest in the parishes of Grovedale-Torquay, Greensborough and as Administrator of Seymour parish. Upon undertaking a period of study he completed a Master's of Science at Loyola College Baltimore MD USA in pastoral counselling, and a Licentiate in Sacred Theology at the Angelicum in Rome.*

*In 2000, upon his return from further studies, Bishop-Elect Bennet was appointed as Director, Ministry to Priests and as Director of Ongoing Formation for Clergy in the Archdiocese of Melbourne. In 2005 he was appointed as the inaugural Director of the Archbishop's of Evangelisation, and in 2007 Parish Priest of St Bede's, North Balwyn.*

*In 2012 Archbishop Hart appointed him as Vicar General and Moderator of the Curia and, in that same year, he was appointed a Prelate of Honour by Pope Benedict XVI. He has served as a Diocesan Consultor and served on numerous committees of the Archdiocese of Melbourne including: the Archbishop's Personnel Board, Curia, the Diocesan Finance Council, Catholic Capital Grants Ltd and on advisory bodies associated with Catholic Education Melbourne. In March 2020 Archbishop P A Comensoli appointed him as Parish Priest of St Joseph's, West Brunswick.*

*Pope Francis appointed him as Tenth Bishop of Sale on the Feast of St Cyril of Alexandria and Feast Day of the Patroness of the Diocese, Our Lady of Perpetual Help, 27 June.*