



## AUSTRALIAN CATHOLIC BISHOPS CONFERENCE

### **Bishop Ken Howell appointed seventh Bishop of Toowoomba**

**MEDIA RELEASE**

**May 24, 2023**

Pope Francis has this evening appointed Bishop Ken Howell, who has served as Auxiliary Bishop of Brisbane since 2017, the seventh Bishop of Toowoomba.

Bishop Howell will succeed Bishop Robert McGuckin, who has led the Diocese of Toowoomba since 2012, whose resignation Pope Francis has accepted.

"I am deeply humbled to be called by Pope Francis to shepherd this local Church and I thank him sincerely," Bishop Howell said.

"I realise that I have been given a great responsibility to care for the faithful and to engage in the life of the broader community across the Diocese."

After serving as a priest of the Archdiocese of Brisbane for 40 years, and the last six as auxiliary bishop, Bishop Howell conceded there was a "touch of sadness" in leaving.

"However, I do not come to Toowoomba as a stranger," he said.

"The close links between Brisbane and Toowoomba have been longstanding and I know many of the priests of the Diocese.

"I come with a desire to listen to God's people and to understand and grow in love for the mission of this local Church. It is my firm hope that I may accompany the community of the Church of Toowoomba, as together we seek to live and proclaim the Good News of Jesus Christ in the world."

In addition to parish ministry and leadership positions within the Archdiocese of Brisbane, Bishop Howell completed a licentiate in sacred liturgy at the Pontifical Institute Sant'Anselmo in Rome and served as vice rector of Holy Spirit Seminary, the Queensland regional seminary, for six years.

Australian Catholic Bishops Conference president Archbishop Timothy Costelloe SDB welcomed Bishop Howell's appointment.

"Having worked as secretary to Archbishop John Bathersby, and as Auxiliary Bishop and Vicar General in Brisbane, he will arrive well equipped for this new ministry to which he has been called," he said.

"He has been a valued member of the Bishops Conference for the past six years."

Archbishop Costelloe also paid tribute to Bishop McGuckin, saying he "offered the Conference great service for more than a decade, providing exceptional leadership particularly in the area of canon law".

"His episcopal ministry has been generous, extending well beyond the normal age of retirement to serve the people of Toowoomba and the Church in Australia," Archbishop Costelloe said.

Bishop McGuckin said he had been "privileged" to serve as Bishop of Toowoomba for 11 years and wished Bishop Howell "every blessing as he takes up his pastoral ministry in this vast and special Diocese".

"The people of the Archdiocese of Brisbane will be sad at losing Bishop Ken, but rest assured Bishop Ken will be warmly welcomed to Toowoomba," Bishop McGuckin said.

Bishop Howell's installation as Bishop of Toowoomba is scheduled for July 11 at St Patrick's Cathedral.