

A wonderful day!

Beyond the colourful pageantry and the uplifting music, what can I tell you about seeing and hearing the new voice leading our Diocese? On meeting Bishop Richard, I experienced a very human man with a firm handshake, a warm smile and a sparkle in his eye.

Bishop Richard said he had been an oblate in the Benedictine community for 30 years so will be very familiar with the first line of St. Benedict's rule of "Listen with the ear of the heart". He said as bishop "the key thing is to listen for a while".

I feel the wisdom he will have gained from being part of a monastic community together with the enthusiasm and organization he has gained from his military service will equip him well in his role as Bishop. I feel certain he will see his role as Bishop of Arundel and Brighton as a new adventure rather than a burden.

So we can look forward to a shepherd who has promised his commitment to us in prayer and service, a Bishop whose wish is that all "those searching, perhaps even unknowingly for God" may "taste and see that the Lord is good" and as Christ has wished that "all may have life and have it to the full".

Brenda Dennison

The Installation of Bishop Richard was indeed a memorable and well-organised occasion with a full house including a strong military presence reflecting the new bishop's former role and an impressive number of clergy in attendance. The task of confining reflections of the afternoon to be sufficiently concise is not an easy one!

The music, so important in the liturgy when appropriately chosen and played/sung well was quite exceptional and truly enhanced the Mass and sense of occasion. Two points will be particularly remembered; the very moving part said/part sung Litany of the Saints during the Procession of the Clergy and how powerful this is when performed well with strong participation from the congregation and the full justice done to Paul Inwood's 50th Anniversary Mass setting with combined Cathedral and university choirs and a congregation 600 strong!

Perhaps the strongest reflection would be the addresses of Bishop Richard and the Papal Nuncio. Bishop Richard called us to commit ourselves to ever-deeper prayer, to rejoice in the past but to also look forward and to grow in our understanding of the gift of faith. This message to me was of a confident and clear purpose, an acknowledgement of working with others and of humility. The Papal Nuncio reinforced the message of service and humility in the need for the Bishop "to be prepared to wash the feet of those he served".

Finally, the installation of our new Bishop is an opportunity for the beginning of a new era, a time for renewal and, importantly, a time for hope.

Stuart Dennison