



Most Reverend Vincent Long Van Nguyen OFM Conv DD STL

Bishop of Parramatta

Bethany Centre, 470 Church St, Parramatta NSW 2150, Australia

PO Box 3066, North Parramatta, NSW 1750

☎ 02 8838 3400 📠 02 9630 4813

✉ bishop@parracatholic.org

🌐 parracatholic.org

31 October 2020

Dear brothers and sisters at Our Lady of the Way Parish,

Fr Paul will be announcing at all Masses this week that I have appointed him to be the new Pastor of Our Lady Queen of Peace Parish Greystanes from the middle of January 2021. I know that this will come as somewhat of a surprise given that he has only been parish priest of Emu Plains for two years in what is normally a term of six years for a pastor.

As you would all be aware, we have been for the past forty years, facing a shortage of ordained priests in the Church. Whilst the Diocese of Parramatta has been greatly blest by the arrival of a number of clergy from overseas, and whilst our own seminary currently has fifteen seminarians, we are faced with a shortage of priests with suitable experience and seniority to lead our big parish communities. Fr Paul, aside from having been your pastor, has for the past eight years been the Director of the Institute for Mission. His appointment to Emu Plains enabled him to continue in that pivotal role at the IFM.

In assuming his new role at Greystanes Fr Paul will be relinquishing his leadership of the IFM which has undergone a very positive transformation under his leadership. The IFM along with several specialist ministries operated by the Diocese is currently undergoing an evaluation which will probably see a more integrated approach to their operations. This seemed then a good moment for him to refocus his ministry.

It is my intention to appoint an Administrator for the time being to Emu Plains. Some of you will remember the process that led to the Diocesan Pastoral Plan: Faith in Our Future. One of the recommendations in that plan was that in the future some consideration might be given to whether it would be beneficial to "twin" the parishes of Emu Plains and Glenbrook. I would like to explore whether that recommendation has any currency given that some years have passed since that plan was formulated. In order for that process to begin it would be prudent to have an Administrator whilst we discern together what the Parish of Emu Plains might look like into the future, and how it might (or might not) relate to the Parish of Glenbrook.

I would ask that you pray for Fr Paul as he prepares for this next phase of his ministry in the Church. I also give thanks for all that he has achieved and the initiatives he has begun at Emu Plains. None of this will be lost as we move forward, because ultimately it is you, the People of God who are the church in Emu Plains.

I have asked Fr Michael Gitau, currently the assistant priest at Springwood and Lawson to become the administrator of the Parish of Emu Plains from 1 December 2020.

Please welcome your new Administrator and support him as he takes over from Fr Paul and continues to promote the Gospel of Jesus Christ in this parish.

I remain, yours in Christ

Most Reverend Vincent Long Van Nguyen OFM Conv STL DD

Bishop of Parramatta