



26 May 2020

Dear people and clergy of the Diocese of Wagga Wagga,

Greetings in the Risen Lord. Pope Francis has asked me to be the bishop of Wagga Wagga Diocese and I want to commence our friendship and relationship. I am grateful and am looking forward to being among you.

Archbishop Prowse has told me of your love for the Lord and your generosity and faithfulness to Him.

You have waited a long time for a new bishop. I thank you all for your perseverance, your patience and your good will, which have enabled the Diocese to function so well over these last three-and-a-half years.

With you, I acknowledge and thank Bishop Gerard Hanna, who served the Diocese for over 14 years.

Thank you, also, to Archbishop Christopher Prowse, who will continue to serve as Apostolic Administrator until my installation, and Fr Kevin O'Reilly and Msgr Douglas George, the delegates of the Apostolic Administrator. They have almost certainly served for much longer than they expected. I join with you in gratitude to them and to the staff of the Diocese.

This Diocese was here long before I was called to be Bishop and will be around long after me; that reminds us that this is God's work. Each Sunday we recite that we believe in the Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church. One meaning of this is that we trust that God is working in and through the Church. For this reason, I experience this appointment as a call from God to be with you and to journey with you as disciple, brother and bishop. Together, as a community of missionary disciples, we will worship, love and evangelise.

I am aware that I have much to learn, particularly about parish life and the joys and challenges of being a Catholic in Wagga Wagga Diocese. Keen to listen to your stories and those of the Diocese, I come humbly, with deep interest and love.



As the people and clergy of Wagga Wagga Diocese, we will face many challenges together and can do so with hope and confidence as Jesus is with us to the end of time.

COVID-19 restrictions will make having a large number of people present at the installation of the new bishop impossible, so we will have a quiet beginning after the long wait. Perhaps later we will be able to have a larger formal gathering to celebrate this moment.

Because many of you can't come to me, I will come to you. I do plan to move around and be in various parishes and meet as many of you as possible, as quickly as possible. I look forward to meeting you personally, learning the stories of your communities and working collaboratively with you in living out our mission as disciples of Jesus.

Please pray for me that I may offer the service that the Diocese needs. I will pray for you.

Mary Immaculate, pray for us.

St Michael the Archangel, pray for us.

St Mary MacKillop, pray for us.

St Philip Neri, pray for us.

St Eugene de Mazenod, pray for us.

Blessed Joseph Gerard, pray for us.

Yours in Jesus Christ and Mary Immaculate

Mark Edwards OMI  
Bishop Elect of Wagga Wagga