

The Reverend Canon Stephen Race, currently Rector of The Benefice of Central Barnsley in the Anglican Diocese of Leeds and also Area Dean of Barnsley, has been appointed as the new Bishop of Beverley.

Speaking of his upcoming role for the Northern Province of the Church of England, Fr Stephen said he would strive for positive dialogues within the church and looked forward to serving people across the whole region.

“I am slowly getting used to the idea that I have been called by God to be a bishop in His church and that I have been invited to take on the role and responsibility of the Bishop of Beverley,” said Fr Stephen.

“I look forward to meeting new colleagues and partners in the Gospel as we seek to serve the parishes and people of the Northern Province.

“It is my hope that all those who look to the Bishop of Beverley for pastoral and sacramental support may continue to be a vibrant presence within the Church in order that all people may have the opportunity to hear and respond to the transformational love of Jesus Christ.

“I consider myself to be fortunate enough to have had positive and nurturing experiences of a wide variety of traditions within the Church, all of which bring their own charism and insights to our fellowship.

“I recognise the challenges that come with being the Bishop of Beverley, but will seek to be a Bishop for the whole church and rejoice in the gift of the Five Guiding Principles which offer us a profound way to live despite our differences. I continue to pray for the fruitfulness of our ecumenical dialogues that seek to draw churches into the unity for which the Lord prays. I hope that reconciliation will be at the forefront of my life as I seek



Stephen Cottrell, Archbishop of York said: “I warmly welcome Fr Stephen’s appointment as Bishop of Beverley and he, together with the parishes he will serve, will have my prayers. Like every person who is called into episcopal ministry Fr Stephen won’t just be a Bishop for those committed to his care, but for the whole church. Indeed, I very much look forward to Stephen encouraging those parishes who look to the Bishop of Beverley for pastoral and sacramental care to continue to play their full part in the lives of the communities and dioceses of which they are part. Encouraging the continued renewal of the catholic voice of the Church of England continues to be essential for us in being truly a church that is focused on, and shaped by, Jesus Christ.”

The Rt Revd Nick Baines, Bishop of Leeds congratulated Fr Stephen on his new role:

“I welcome the appointment of Stephen as the next Bishop of Beverley. He has been a very effective parish priest and area dean in this diocese and will bring to his new ministry great wisdom, experience and gifts. I look forward to supporting, encouraging and working with him.”

The Rt Revd Tony Robinson, Bishop of Wakefield in the Diocese of Leeds added:

“I am delighted by the appointment of Stephen Race as the next Bishop of Beverley. I have worked with him for the past 17 years and seen his ministry as Parish Priest, Diocesan Director of Ordinands and Area Dean of Barnsley. Stephen will bring a wealth of experience to his role as a bishop.”

Stephen was born in Zimbabwe during the struggle for Independence and was raised in the Anglican Provinces of Central and Southern Africa. His commitment to social justice took root while he was still at primary school in South Africa during the anti-Apartheid struggle, but it was during his O Level year as a sixteen year old in Botswana that he first felt the prompting of the Holy Spirit that ultimately led to his ordination.

Graduating from Durham University he qualified as a teacher and following time working in both Kenya and Somerset he went to St Stephen’s House, Oxford in 2000 to begin his formational training. Ordained both deacon and priest in Carlisle Diocese, Stephen has spent his entire ordained ministry in the north of England as a Parish Priest, Area Dean and Diocesan Director of Ordinands.

He has continued as a Bishops’ Adviser in the national discernment process and also keeps himself involved with education as a trustee of a Multi-Academy Trust. He is also a trustee of a charity that helps people with a variety of disabilities access welfare and social support.

Stephen met and married Jane while they were at university. Jane is a full time primary school teacher and they have four adult children.”

*The Consecration of the Bishop of Beverley will take place at York Minster on the Feast of Saint Andrew the Apostle, on Wednesday 30th November, at 11am. Information about tickets will be released in due course.*