

## NEWS FROM PETERBOROUGH DIOCESE

Wednesday 5 May 2010

### **Bishop Frank accepts new challenge back in the North**

The Suffragan Bishop of Brixworth, the Rt Revd Frank White, has been appointed Assistant Bishop in the Newcastle Diocese. He will take up his new appointment in late November, and expects to finish his ministry in Peterborough Diocese at the end of September.

It will be something of a homecoming for Bishop Frank, who originally hails from the north east and was Archdeacon of Sunderland before becoming Bishop of Brixworth.

Commenting on the news, the Bishop of Peterborough, Rt Revd Donald Allister, said, "When my appointment to Peterborough was announced I received many letters and cards. A very large number of them included 'You will have excellent support from Frank White' or 'Frank White is first class', or simply 'You'll like Frank White'.

"In the relatively short time that I have been here I have found all those sentiments to be absolutely true. Frank has become a trustworthy guide, a loyal support and good friend to me. I'm glad he has a few months more here, but I shall miss him very much indeed.

"When Frank told me some time ago that he had been approached about this job two things were absolutely clear to me. First, that Peterborough and I might be about to lose a wonderful friend and bishop. Second, that moving to Newcastle could be exactly right for Frank and Alison.

"Frank has not only held the diocese together during the latter stages of Bishop Ian's illness and during the vacancy, but also continued to lead it forward. He has made and is making my early task of getting to know people without losing sight of the bigger picture so much easier than it might have been.

"I am also delighted for, and grateful to, Alison his wife, who has her own personal and international ministry, and who is just coming to the end of her agreed five-year term as our part-time Curate's Training Co-ordinator. With Frank, she has done much to help Janice and myself settle in, and she has contributed enormously to the life of this diocese and to individual people and churches within it, often in less public ways. We will miss them both.

"My prayers and very best wishes are with them both as they prepare for this change."

Looking ahead to the future, Bishop Frank said, "I have been looking forward greatly to working with Bishop Donald in Peterborough Diocese and wasn't expecting to move – and certainly not so soon after his arrival – but when the approach was made to me I became convinced that this was a call from God.

"I went to school in Newcastle and spent much of my ministry in the north-east, and it is the area to which Alison and I planned to retire when that time comes. We have many friends and relatives there, so it will be something of a homecoming for us. However, it will also be a wrench because in the eight years we have been in the Peterborough Diocese we have grown to love and value the people, the churches and the area.

“I am especially grateful to all in this diocese who have welcomed me into their homes, churches and communities. I have learned so much from them, and I will always remember them. They are in good and godly hands in the person of Bishop Donald, and I look forward to hearing how the diocese goes from strength to strength under his leadership.”

The Bishop of Newcastle, The Rt Revd Martin Wharton, said “I am thrilled and delighted that Bishop Frank White has accepted my invitation to become the next Assistant Bishop, and I am sure that the people of the North East will quickly take Bishop Frank and Alison to their hearts.” He added that Alison is already well known in the Diocese and that they would be seeking a suitable appointment for her in the coming months.

Details of farewell events for Bishop Frank and Alison will be circulated in the summer.