

Pope Francis has appointed Father Michael Dooley as the new Bishop of the Dunedin Diocese. Bishop-Elect Michael will be the seventh Bishop of Dunedin and succeeds Bishop Colin Campbell who has served in this role for almost 14 years.

The President of the New Zealand Catholic Bishops Conference (NZCBC) Bishop Patrick Dunn said, “Father Michael’s affinity with the people of the Dunedin Diocese and his long service to the region of Southland and Otago make him the ideal successor for this role.”

“I congratulate Bishop-Elect Michael on his appointment and my prayers are with him as he prepares to take up leadership of the diocese,” commented Bishop Dunn.

Born in Invercargill in 1961 to parents, Joseph Dooley and Mary Hogan, Michael was educated at Heddon Bush Primary School and Central Southland College. After completing an engineering apprenticeship as a fitter and turner, he went on to do a Bachelor of Theology at Otago University and a Master of Theology at Melbourne’s College of Divinity.

Father Michael Dooley was ordained on 13 December 1989. From 1995, he has served as a member of the Priests Council and was a Parish Priest for over 10 years in Southland and Otago. The Bishop-Elect was a Director at the Holy Cross Formation Centre in Mosgiel and held the role of Formator and Spiritual Director at Holy Cross Seminary in Auckland,

In 2016, Bishop Colin Campbell appointed the then Father Michael to the role of Vicar General for the Dunedin Diocese.

Bishop Campbell remarked, “I know that the people of the Dunedin Diocese will warmly welcome the announcement that they now have a new bishop. I have had the pleasure of working with Michael and am delighted with his appointment – his pastoral roles and extensive experience in serving God as a parish leader, formator and spiritual guide have prepared him well for the position. May God bless him and guide him as he takes up this role.”

On the announcement, Bishop-Elect Michael said, “I have been blessed to serve in ministry as a priest in the Diocese of Dunedin and I now take on this role as a bishop very aware of my need for God’s help and thankful for the support of so many wonderful people over the years and into the future.”

Bishop Campbell will continue on in the role of Administrator of the Diocese until the Ordination and Installation of Bishop-Elect Michael.

In recognizing Bishop Campbell's role as Dunedin's Bishop for almost 14 years, Bishop Dunn commented, "he has been a compassionate and selfless leader, very much loved by his clergy and people," he said.

"I thank him for his untiring service and long-standing commitment to all those in his diocese. We bishops have also greatly appreciated his wisdom and experience at our conference meetings."