



Director of the Anglican Centre in Rome and the Archbishop of

The Bishop of Mauritius, the Most Revd Ian Ernest, has been appointed Director of the Anglican Centre in Rome and the Archbishop of Canterbury's Personal Representative to the Holy See. Archbishop Ian, who served as Primate of the Anglican Church of the Indian Ocean for 11 years until 2017, will take up his new role towards the end of 2019. One of his last duties as Bishop of Mauritius will be to welcome Pope Francis to the island when he makes an official visit in September.

"I feel deeply honoured and humbled by this appointment. It is a calling from God which I accept with all humility", Archbishop Ian said. "I will try my best to honour this calling and to honour the office. I look forward to working in close collaboration with the Archbishop of Canterbury and the Board of Governors of the Anglican Centre in Rome."

The Archbishop of Canterbury, the Most Revd Justin Welby, commented: "I am delighted that Archbishop Ian has accepted the call to become the Director of the Anglican Centre in Rome and my Personal Representative to the Holy See. His appointment comes at an exciting time in the growing and important relationship between the Anglican Communion and the Roman Catholic Church.

"The Anglican Centre in Rome was established just over 50 years ago at the time of the first public meeting between a Pope and an Archbishop of Canterbury since the Reformation. Over the past 50 years the relationship between my predecessors and successive Popes, and the connections between people involved in official ecumenical dialogues, has deepened that relationship. It is bearing much fruit – as the joint Anglican, Catholic and Presbyterian retreat at the Vatican last month for the political leaders in South Sudan demonstrates.

"Archbishop Ian will bring to his new role a wealth of experience in practical ecumenical engagement; and significant connections throughout the Anglican Communion. I look forward to working with him as we continue to develop our relationship with the Catholic Church."

The Chair of the Board of Governors – the trustees of the Anglican Centre in Rome – the Rt Revd Michael Burrows, Bishop of Cashel, Ferns and Ossory in the Church of Ireland, welcomed Archbishop Ian's appointment, saying: "He brings with him to Rome great enthusiasm for the task, a warm personality and vast experience of his own province and the wider Anglican Communion as a former Archbishop of the Indian Ocean.

"He will be very well suited to the work of an 'ambassador' for the whole Communion in Rome, and to strengthening the role of the ACR as a place of hospitality and study. His track record in practical ecumenism is highly impressive, and the Governors look forward to working with him in the coming years and cherishing his great vision and energy".

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