

The next Bishop of Colombo in the Church of Ceylon will be Fr Dushantha Rodrigo.



The next Bishop of Colombo will be Fr Dushantha Rodrigo, the Archbishop of Canterbury Justin Welby announced today.

Archbishop Justin was asked by the Diocesan Council to select its next Diocesan bishop in accordance with its constitution, when they found themselves unable to do so last month. He did this in his capacity as Metropolitan of the Church of Ceylon.

The Archbishop of Canterbury said: "I am pleased to announce that Fr Dushantha is to be the next Bishop of Colombo. I congratulated him personally by telephone on Friday and am glad to declare my support for him publicly today.

"Please accept my apologies that it has taken me a little time to understand the needs of the diocese, and to identify the qualities that will be needed in its next bishop. I am most grateful to all those who have expressed their views to me so clearly and candidly - not only the members of the formal Consultative Body but also members of the Diocesan Standing Committee, former bishops, and many more.

“All have given me invaluable insights, and I am confident that in reliance on the Holy Spirit’s guidance, Fr Dushantha will find the strength he will need to lead and reconcile this lively church ‘at such a time as this’ in united witness to the love of Christ amid all the social, ethnic, religious and cultural diversity in the communities that will be in his care.

“I should say that although I regard it as a privilege to have been entrusted with this important function in the life of the Church of Ceylon, as its ‘Metropolitan’, it is not a role I have sought, or feel comfortable having to exercise. In my view, it carries too many reminders of a colonial past. I have therefore sought and obtained from Fr Dushantha his assurance that he will give urgent priority to enabling the Church of Ceylon to take its proper place as a fully independent province in the life of the wider Anglican Communion.

“So I commend Fr Dushantha to your prayers as he embarks on this demanding new stage in his ministry.”

Fr Dushantha said today: "The Church of Ceylon Diocese of Colombo in all its richness and vibrant faith is called upon to witness as it has done through the past 175 years as a community that will strive to be obedient to the gospel in its walk of faith and service in the days to come.

“As we look to the next decade in the midst of new realities our lives must reflect what God is doing in our midst at this point of time. To a God who has been gracious and merciful we need to sing an unending hymn of praise and extend to one another a magnanimous gesture of kindness that will carry us through to be faithful in the midst of many a challenge.

"Our people who are so diverse live side by side and strive to bring meaning to every moment and we are truly blessed to be part of that life giving diversity."

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