

IAN PALMER CONSECRATED BISHOP IN BATHURST



Sun 10 February 2013

Photo and story by Lew Hitchick

Former Rector of Queanbeyan, Ian Palmer, was consecrated Bishop of Bathurst by Archbishop Peter Jensen, supported by twelve other Bishops from throughout the Australian church, on February 9.

The new Bishop comes to Bathurst from the Diocese of Canberra and Goulburn, where he has served for the last seven years as Rector of the Queanbeyan as well as Archdeacon of South Canberra, and as Archdeacon for Chaplains.

The parishes of Queanbeyan and Muswellbrook were both strongly represented in the 500-strong congregation taking part in Saturday's consecration service, with representatives from the parish of Queanbeyan and the Diocese of Canberra and Goulburn formally presenting the incoming bishop to the people of Bathurst Diocese at the beginning of the service.

"I am humbled and very surprised"

"Beloved sisters and brothers in Christ, you have called me to walk with you and serve you as your shepherd. To be honest, I am humbled and very surprised."

These words were part of Bishop Ian Palmer's response to the speeches of warm welcome following his consecration as the 10th Bishop of the Anglican Diocese of Bathurst in All Saints' Cathedral, Bathurst.

Following the service, Bishop Ian and Liz Palmer were welcomed to the region by Wiradjuri Elder and Anglican Priest, The Reverend Gloria Shipp, and her husband Eddie, on behalf of all the nations across the Diocese of Bathurst.

Gloria and Eddie presented the new Bishop with a coolabah, a traditional Aboriginal carrying basket hand-carved by Eddie, containing small samples of soil from each of the parishes in the Diocese of Bathurst. They then invited the Bishop to mix the samples together, symbolising the unity of the diocese.

This welcome was warmly endorsed by Cr Ken Keith, Mayor of Parkes, on behalf of the various local government regions of Central Western NSW.

Mrs Leigh Edwards, Deputy Chancellor of Bathurst Diocese, welcomed the Palmers on behalf of the people of the diocese. She also presented Liz Palmer with a large painting depicting the Biblical story of Jesus encouraging the Apostle Peter to walk on the water.

Reminding the congregation that Bishop Ian was the 10th Bishop of Bathurst, Leigh Edwards said that a member of his congregation in Queanbeyan had quipped that this would make him 'Mitre 10' – so she presented him with a purple tee shirt monogrammed 'Bishop Ian – Mitre 10'.

A pilgrim

In his speech of reply, Bishop Ian explained that his surname 'Palmer' was used in medieval times to describe a person who had made the pilgrimage to the Holy Land and brought back a palm branch.

"I am a pilgrim – get used to it!" he declared. "God and the church have called me to accompany and go with you on this journey, and we'll walk together wherever the Spirit of God leads us."

Acknowledging the financial difficulties facing the Diocese of Bathurst, Bishop Ian said that he did not anticipate that the journey would be easy.

"A Godly pilgrimage is always arduous, physically and spiritually", he observed.

Bishop Ian Palmer, 62, was born in the United Kingdom. He gained his Theology degree at King's College, London, in 1971, and his post-graduate diploma at Durham University four years later. He moved to Australia in 1990 to take up an appointment as Director of Evangelism in the Diocese of Newcastle, and moved to Queanbeyan in 2005.

He has also served as a member of the Board of Anglicare NSW South, NSW West and ACT, the welfare arm of the Anglican Church which now operates as an alliance across the Dioceses of Canberra-Goulburn, Bathurst and Riverina.

He is married to Liz, who has considerable experience as a spiritual director and leads residential courses in this field at St Mark's National Theological Centre in Canberra. They have two adult daughters.