



## **MEDIA RELEASE**

**29 June 2018**

### **Broken Bay Bishop Peter A Comensoli DD Announced as Ninth Archbishop for Melbourne**

Most Rev Peter A Comensoli, until now the Bishop of the Diocese of Broken Bay, in northern Sydney and the Central Coast of NSW, has today been appointed by Pope Francis as the ninth Archbishop of Melbourne.

“I am delighted at the news of Archbishop-elect Peter Comensoli’s appointment,” says Archbishop Denis Hart, retiring Archbishop of Melbourne.

“A deeply pastoral and faith-filled man, he will bring many gifts to serve our people. I join the Catholic community in the Archdiocese of Melbourne in our prayerful and heartfelt welcome to him.”

Archbishop-elect Comensoli said he was deeply moved by the Holy Father’s trust in making this appointment.

“The life of Christian discipleship is a precious gift, developed through hearing and responding to God’s call. In accepting this call to be a missionary among God’s People of the Archdiocese of Melbourne, I readily acknowledge the great responsibility entrusted to me, along with the frailties I carry.

“To the good people of Melbourne, let me say that you are already in my prayers. As I come among you I place my trust in the tender encouragement of Jesus, through his Blessed Mother. We are pilgrims together in the Lord’s vineyard. As we take these first steps in friendship, may we anchor our lives to his Gospel.

“I am deeply aware of the painful witness you bear because of the crimes committed in the Church against the most innocent, our children and the vulnerable. I share the bewilderment and anger you feel at the failure of Church leaders to believe victims and to respond to them with justice and compassion. This is not the way of Jesus Christ. It is our solemn shared duty to right the grievous wrongs of the past and ensure that the future is very different. I pledge myself without reserve to that task, and I ask you to join me in building on the work already underway in the Archdiocese to create safe communities of faith, where trust is earned and care is offered.

“Having been appointed by Pope Francis, I recognise the challenge he has placed before me to lead God’s people in Melbourne tenderly, mercifully and joyfully. As a shepherd after the

heart of Jesus, the Lord expects me to reach out to all with a Gospel boldness. Therefore, I place my stewardship of the Archdiocese of Melbourne under the intercession of Ss Peter and Paul, on whose feast day this announcement is made.”

Born and educated in the Illawarra region of NSW, the Archbishop-elect served in the Wollongong Diocese in a number of parishes and was Diocesan Chancellor for six years prior to his appointment as Auxiliary Bishop to the Archdiocese of Sydney in 2011, and as Apostolic Administrator to the Archdiocese in 2014.

Archbishop-elect Comensoli will now lead the Archdiocese of Melbourne after serving as the Bishop of Broken Bay over the past three and a half years.

“I will miss tremendously the wonderful people – laity, religious and clergy – of Broken Bay. For the all too brief time that it has been my privilege to serve them, I am proud to have been their friend and shepherd. Now I look forward to getting to know the people of Melbourne. And as a northerner, I will need some guidance around that mysterious code of football called AFL!

“I extend my deep gratitude to Archbishop Hart for his faithful leadership and strength of Christian character over the past 17 years. His welcome to me has been warm, generous and encouraging, and I wish him every blessing in his retirement.”

At a national level, Archbishop-elect Comensoli is currently a member of the Bishops’ Commission for Family, Youth and Life, and for Evangelisation. From November 2018 he will take up the appointment of Chair of the Bishops’ Commission for Life, Family and Public Engagement, and membership of the Bishops’ Commission for the Plenary Council.

Archbishop-elect Comensoli will take up stewardship of the Archdiocese on 1 August 2018, at 7pm, during a Solemn Mass and Reception at St Patrick’s Cathedral, Melbourne.

**The Archbishop-Elect will be available for a brief Press Conference on Saturday 30 June at 3.00pm in the main courtyard of Our Lady of the Rosary Cathedral, 23 Yardley Ave, Waitara. To register attendance and for further information please contact:**

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**Once the Archbishop-elect has moved to Melbourne, he will be further available for media enquiries.**

***Official Portraits are available through the Office for Communications, Catholic Diocese of Broken Bay***