

ACU appoints Martin Daubney and Virginia Bourke as new Chancellor and Pro-Chancellor

The Hon Justice Martin Daubney AM and Ms Virginia Bourke have been appointed to the positions of Chancellor and Pro-Chancellor of Australian Catholic University (ACU).

President of ACU Corporation Most Reverent Mark Coleridge BA DSS informed the ACU community by email on Monday 19 July.

“As Australian Catholic University moves into a new phase with the appointment of Professor Zlatko Skrbis as Vice-Chancellor and President, I welcome as the new Chancellor and Pro-Chancellor, Justice Martin Daubney and Ms Virginia Bourke,” Archbishop Coleridge said.

“The appointment of a Chancellor from Brisbane shows more clearly the national character of the university, and the appointment of a woman as Pro-Chancellor shows the university’s commitment to inclusion at every level.

“Both Justice Daubney and Ms Bourke bring to the role a broad range of professional achievements and experiences. They are people of faith, deeply committed to the mission of the Church, alert to the needs of universities at this time and to the dialogue between the Gospel and culture which lies at the heart of ACU. I welcome their appointment and look forward to working with them into the future.”

Justice Daubney will be ACU’s fifth Chancellor.

Justice Daubney is well known in the Australian legal community. Following a career as a leading barrister, he was appointed to the Supreme Court of Queensland in 2007, and as president of the Queensland Civil and Administrative Tribunal in 2017. Prior to his appointment to the bench, he had served for many years on the Council of the Bar Association of Queensland, including as vice-president in 2005 and president in 2006. Since his appointment as a judge, he has continued his wider service to the legal profession, both nationally and internationally. He has also occupied leadership positions in numerous Church, community and cultural organisations. Justice Daubney served on the Senate of the University of Queensland from 2010 to 2017, and as president of King’s College Council since 2009.

In 2018 he was made a Member of the Order of Australia for significant service to the law, and to the judiciary, to education, and to the community.

He is also an Honorary Fellow of ACU.

He will serve a term of five years starting 1 January 2022.

“This appointment is a great honour. I thank the Corporation for entrusting me with the responsibility to serve as Chancellor of this unique national institution, which is firmly grounded in 2000 years of Catholic intellectual tradition and the Church’s engagement in university education for a millennium,” said Justice Daubney. “ACU’s core commitments to the pursuit of knowledge, the dignity of the human person and the common good resonate for all Australians. I look forward to working with the Pro-Chancellor, the Senate, the Vice-Chancellor, and all of the ACU community to advance this mission in a charism of service inspired by ACU’s patron saint, St Mary of the Cross.”

Ms Bourke will take up her position as Pro-Chancellor on 1 July 2022 for a term of five years.

An active figure in the health and legal community in Melbourne, Ms Bourke brings to ACU tremendous experience of governance and community involvement: she is currently Chair of Mercy Health and of St. John Ambulance Victoria, and is a Director of St. John Ambulance Australia, Catholic Health Australia and Caritas Australia. Ms Bourke is a consultant with the national health industry group at Minter Ellison Lawyers and previously worked as General Counsel for the Institute of the Sisters of Mercy of Australia and Papua New Guinea and as Special Counsel in the Employment Law group at Minter Ellison Lawyers. She is also a member of the Boards Appointment Committee with the Catholic Archdiocese of Melbourne and an Advisory Board Member for the PM Glynn Institute ACU.

“I am delighted and honoured to be appointed to the role of Pro-Chancellor of ACU. I feel a great affinity with the University, both its history in the work of many of the Catholic congregations which have shaped my life and its future as a global leader in Catholic education and mission-based research. I look forward to engaging with the rich network of relationships which forms the ACU community.”

Mr Julien O’Connell AO will continue in his role as Acting Chancellor until 1 January 2022 when Justice Daubney takes up the role as Chancellor. He will then continue in his role as Pro-Chancellor until 30 June when Ms Bourke takes up her role as Pro-Chancellor on 1 July 2022.

“The announcement and appointment of both Justice Martin Daubney and Ms Virginia Bourke for the respective roles of Chancellor and Pro-Chancellor is one that I greet with great enthusiasm and confidence that the legacy over 25 years will now continue in safe hands for Australian Catholic University. Their appointments follow an extensive review and evaluation of a very large number of candidates for these positions.

“Both Justice Daubney and Ms Bourke come with exceptional credentials and are also imbued with a strong sense of who we are as a Catholic university. I have no doubt that in the years to come we collectively, that is ACU, will see a profound mark of service by both to ACU and as such a continuing path of mission in higher education.”

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