



AUSTRALIAN CATHOLIC BISHOPS CONFERENCE

Media Release

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Archbishop Philip Wilson welcomes creation of the Chaldean Eparchy of Oceania

The President of the Australian Catholic Bishops Conference, Archbishop Philip Wilson, today welcomed the creation by Pope Benedict XVI of the Chaldean Eparchy of Oceania.

Archbishop Wilson also expressed a warm welcome to Archbishop Djibrail Kassab, who has been appointed the first Bishop of the new Eparchy, and will be transferring from the See of Bassorah in Iraq.

“On behalf of the Australian Catholic Bishops Conference and the Catholic Church in Australia I welcome the creation of the Chaldean Eparchy and look forward to welcoming the arrival of Archbishop Kassab,” Archbishop Wilson said.

“It is important that Catholics who belong to the Chaldean Church have the opportunity to celebrate their faith and worship according to their own rituals and laws and the creation of a Chaldean Eparchy will help facilitate this.”

The Chaldean Church is an Eastern Church of the Catholic Church. Today, as in ancient times, its presence is centred on the Middle East, particularly in Iraq.

Other Eastern Catholic Churches, the Ukrainian, Maronite and Melkite churches, have been present in Australia for almost a century and each have their own bishop. Eastern Churches are in communion with the Roman Catholic Church, but have distinct liturgies, according to their tradition, as well as some different emphases in theology and canon law. Immigration to Australia has increased their numbers.

The new Chaldean Eparchy corresponds to a Diocese of the Latin Rite and embraces the Chaldean communities in Australia and New Zealand.

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