



ANTILLES EPISCOPAL CONFERENCE

9a Gray St, Port of Spain

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President: Most Rev. Gabriel Malzaire, Bishop of Roseau

Vice President: Most Rev. Charles Jason Gordon, Archbishop of Port of Spain

General Secretary: Fr. Donald Chambers

Telephone: 1 868 622-2932 Email: aecgeneralsec@gmail.com Website: aecbishops.org

PRESS RELEASE

The Holy Father, Pope Francis has appointed Fr. Neil Sebastian Scantlebury, 55, to be the next bishop of the Diocese of Bridgetown, Barbados. He will become the first Barbadian to be ordained a Catholic bishop. The announcement was made Monday, December 28 at noon, Vatican City time. The date of episcopal ordination has already been set: Wednesday, March 17 at St Patrick's Cathedral, Bridgetown. March 17 is the feast day of St Patrick. Since his ordination to the priesthood, Bishop-elect Scantlebury has served in the Diocese of St Thomas in the US Virgin Islands. He will succeed Archbishop Jason Gordon, who has been the Diocesan Administrator for Bridgetown since his appointment as Archbishop of Port of Spain in 2017.

Bishop-elect Scantlebury was born October 1, 1965, to Deacon Keith and Myma Scantlebury (both deceased). Having finished his primary and secondary education in Barbados, he entered the St Augustine campus, The University of the West Indies, graduating with a degree in Mechanical Engineering. He then moved to the US Virgin Islands to teach religion at the Catholic school of St Peter and Paul Cathedral, St Thomas.

He was accepted as a candidate for the priesthood, and sent to Mount St Mary's University, Emmitsburg, Maryland, USA. After earning his masters in divinity, he was ordained a priest for the Diocese of St Thomas on May 18, 1995. In 1999, he obtained the Master of Art in Sacred Scripture at the same university. He served as parochial Vicar at Holy Family Church, St Thomas from 1995 to 1997. In August 1997 he was appointed administrator of Our Lady of Mt Carmel Parish on the island of St John, and shortly thereafter the parish priest, holding the position until August 2003. In that same month he became rector of Sts Peter and Paul Cathedral, St Thomas. Six years later, 2009, he returned to Holy Family Church becoming its parish priest. In 2020 he was appointed parish priest of St Ann's Parish, St Croix.

During his 25 years as a priest, Bishop-elect Scantlebury has served the Diocese of St Thomas as Chancellor, Consultor, member of the Administrative Board of Catholic Charities, member of the Administrative Board for Child Protection, and member of the teaching faculty of St Peter and Paul High School. Given at the Office of the Antilles Episcopal Conference Secretariat, Port of Spain, Trinidad on the 28th December, 2020.

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