Catholic Bishops' Conference of England and Wales

For Immediate Release

19 December 2025

On behalf of the Diocese of Westminster

Bishop Richard Moth appointed new Archbishop of Westminster

His Holiness Pope Leo XIV has today, 19 December, appointed the Right Reverend Richard Moth as Archbishop of Westminster. Ordained to the priesthood for the Archdiocese of Southwark on 3 July 1982, Archbishop-elect Moth has served as Bishop of Arundel and Brighton since 2015. Prior to that, he was the Catholic Bishop of the Forces from 2009 to 2015.

Archbishop-elect Moth will become the 12th Archbishop of Westminster, succeeding Cardinal Vincent Nichols, who has served in the role since 2009. Cardinal Nichols will now become Apostolic Administrator of the Diocese of Westminster until Archbishop-elect Moth is Installed at Westminster Cathedral on Saturday, 14 February 2026.

On hearing of his appointment, Archbishop-elect Moth said:

"I am moved greatly by the trust that Pope Leo has placed in me, in appointing me to the Diocese of Westminster. As I prepare to move to the Diocese, I am so grateful for the support being given to me by Cardinal Vincent Nichols at this time. He has given dedicated service to the Diocese and will be missed greatly.

"Serving the Diocese of Arundel and Brighton has given me the wonderful opportunity of sharing the Church's mission with lay faithful and clergy, and I give thanks for the many blessings of these last ten years.

"My first task will be to get to know the priests and people of Westminster and I look forward, now, to serving them. With them, and building on the firm foundations that have been laid by so many down the years, I look forward to continuing the great adventure that is the life of the Church and witness to the Gospel."

Cardinal Vincent Nichols said:

"I am delighted at this news. Archbishop-elect Richard will bring to our Diocese many gifts and considerable episcopal experience from his years of ministry in the

Diocese of Arundel and Brighton, and before that as Bishop of the Forces. I look forward very much to his Installation as our new Archbishop on Saturday, 14 February 2026. It is, of course, St Valentine's Day, as well as the Feast of Saints Cyril and Methodius, co-Patrons of Europe.

"I remember being present in Westminster Cathedral on 29 September 2009 for the Episcopal Ordination of Bishop Richard as Bishop of the Forces. So today I can say: 'Welcome back, dear Bishop Richard. You are most welcome indeed.'"

Biography

Bishop Richard Moth was born in Chingola, Zambia, in 1958. He was brought up in Kent and, after leaving The Judd School, Tonbridge, began formation for the Priesthood at St. John's Seminary, Wonersh. He was ordained Priest for the Archdiocese of Southwark on 3 June 1982.

He served as assistant priest at St. Bede's, Clapham Park, before pursing studies in Canon Law at St. Paul University, Ottawa. In 1987, he was appointed assistant priest at St. Saviour's Lewisham, during which time he also served as a Territorial Army Chaplain with 217 General Hospital RAMC(V).

He served as Private Secretary to Archbishop Michael Bowen from 1992 until 2001, during which time he was also President of the Interdiocesan Tribunal of Second Instance of Southwark and Vocations Director. In 2001 he was appointed Vicar General and Chancellor of the Diocese.

He was ordained Bishop of the Forces on 29 September 2009 in Westminster Cathedral and served in this capacity, until his appointment as Bishop of Arundel and Brighton on 21 March 2015.

He is Chair of Governors at St. Mary's University, Twickenham, Chair of the Department for Social Justice of the Catholic Bishops' Conference of England and Wales and Liaison Bishop for Prisons. He serves on the Standing Committee of the Bishops' Conference. He chairs The Plater Trust, dedicated to the support of projects across England and Wales that put into practice the principles of Catholic Social Teaching. He is also a member of the Mixed Commission of the Bishops' Conference – a body that brings together bishops and those living Religious Life.

Bishop Richard has been an Oblate of Pluscarden Abbey for over 40 years and is a member of the Equestrian Order of the Holy Sepulchre of Jerusalem, travelling many times to the Holy Land. In 2020 he was appointed Prior of the Southern Section of the Lieutenancy of England and Wales.

He is a Liveryman and Extra Court Member of the Skinners' Company and a Freeman the City of London, serving the Company as Chair of its History Committee.

He enjoys horse riding and walking.

The Diocese of Westminster

The Diocese of Westminster serves the London boroughs north of the River Thames, stretching from the River Lea in the east to Hillingdon in the west, and including Hertfordshire to the north and the Borough of Spelthorne to the south.

Established by Blessed Pius IX on 29 September 1850, the diocese celebrated its 175th anniversary in 2025. Today, the diocese's parishes and schools reflect a rich diversity of cultures and traditions. A key part of its mission is expressed through agencies such as Caritas Westminster who support those most at risk of exclusion due to poverty, disability, isolation, and exploitation.