

From Fr. Thomas

As I take over from Fr. Graham, I thought it would be worth writing a short note to introduce myself.

As you will already know, I was ordained as a Priest in June of this year; part of a group of eight ordained for the Ordinariate, and within that a group of two who are the first to be ordained within the Ordinariate who were not formerly clergy in the Church of England. God willing, the first two of a great many.

I was raised in a vicarage, and so in an actively church-going family which laid a firm foundation for my later spiritual journey. The family moved around quite a bit in my earlier years, but became settled in Buckinghamshire which is where I have lived for most of my life (though never forgetting that I'm of solidly Yorkshire stock). I went up to Scotland to read Economics and International Relations at S. Andrews, and it was there that I first encountered the anglo-catholic movement; this rapidly deepened and enlivened my faith. As part of this enlivening, I first became aware of a potential vocation to the priesthood; however, the challenges which anglo-catholics faced in the Church of England led me to put the idea on ice for sometime.

The announcement of the Ordinariate was a watershed, it seemed to be the answer to all of my problems in the Church of England – preserving the many good things in our tradition and patrimony, whilst doing so in a doctrinally secure ecclesial environment. After entering the Catholic Church as part of the 'first wave', I felt in a position to offer myself for ordination. Following the usual selection process, I began a programme of formation in September 2012. At first I was sent to study with the Dominicans in Oxford, and then after three years I moved to S. Mary's College, Oscott, for the second half.

Having been ordained Priest this June, the Ordinary asked that I combine a curacy with the Eastbourne Ordinariate Mission with the co-ordinating rôle as your Group Pastor. I look forward to getting to know you over the coming weeks and months. Be assured that you all remain in my prayers, and please do keep me in yours as I begin this new work.

Fr. Thomas.