



AUSTRALIAN CATHOLIC BISHOPS CONFERENCE

THE PRESIDENT

MEDIA RELEASE

2 February 2026

Second Auxiliary Bishop appointed for Perth

Pope Leo XIV has appointed Perth priest Fr Nelson Po as an auxiliary bishop for the Archdiocese of Perth.

Australian Catholic Bishops Conference President, Archbishop Timothy Costelloe SDB, has welcomed the appointment.

“The Holy Father’s appointment of Fr Nelson will be greeted with great joy and excitement by the whole Catholic community of the archdiocese,” Archbishop Costelloe said.

“The laity, religious and clergy of the archdiocese have been gifted with a new and dynamic shepherd who will bring many gifts to the pastoral leadership of the Archdiocese of Perth.”

Fr Nelson was born on 5 June 1968 in the village of Cantuhaon, Palompon, Leyte, Philippines, as the third of Norma Abordo and Lope Po’s six children.

Following his secondary education, he completed a bachelor’s degree in industrial and management engineering. Following several years working in his chosen profession, he entered the Blessed Sacrament Congregation where he completed a master’s degree in theology, with a major in pastoral ministry, at the Maryhill School of Theology, Manila.

In 2003, at the invitation of Archbishop Hickey, he arrived in Perth to continue his studies for the priesthood at St Charles Seminary, Guildford, as a seminarian for the Archdiocese of Perth.

Following his ordination to the priesthood in 2005, Fr Nelson served as an assistant priest in the Kalgoorlie-Boulder parish before his subsequent appointments as Chaplain to Royal Perth Hospital and as parish priest of the Cloverdale and Applecross parishes.

In reflecting on the phone call he received from the nuncio, advising him of the Holy Father’s appointment, Fr Nelson said: “It was a big surprise to me. It was overwhelming and surreal because I have never dreamed of becoming a bishop. I went straight to the chapel and became very emotional. I felt so inadequate and unworthy, but I know that God’s strength will carry me through.”

Archbishop Costelloe recognises Fr Nelson as being a priest who is well known for his pastoral sensitivity, his commitment to his people, his love for the Church and its liturgy and for his generosity in undertaking many additional roles in the archdiocese beyond his responsibilities as a parish priest.

In reflecting on Fr Nelson’s commitment to, and engagement with, the Church’s Synodal journey at the archdiocesan and universal levels, Archbishop Costeloe highlighted Fr Nelson’s active contributions to the Archdiocese of Perth’s Plenary Council Reference Group (2019–2021); the Perth Diocesan Assembly Reference Group (2023–2024); and his participation in the Jubilee for Synodal Teams and Participatory Bodies in Rome (October 2025).

Bishop-elect Nelson will serve as auxiliary bishop in Perth alongside Bishop Don Sproxton.

The episcopal ordination of Bishop-elect Nelson will take place on a date to be determined following the Easter Triduum.

ENDS

Biography

Bishop-elect Nelson Po

Fr Nelson was born on 5 June 1968 in the village of Cantuhaon, Palompon, Leyte, Philippines, as the third of Norma Abordo and Lope Po's six children.

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Since 2016, he has been one of the Spiritual Directors at St Charles Seminary, Guildford. Fr Nelson has also served as a member of the Priests Remuneration Committee in conjunction with the committee of management for *Catholic Outreach* and the *Centre for Faith Enrichment*.

Fr Nelson served as a member of Archdiocese of Perth's Plenary Council Reference Group (2019-2021); the Perth Diocesan Assembly Reference Group (2023 – 2024); and attended the Jubilee for Synodal Teams and Participatory Bodies in Rome (October 2025).