



## Homily of the Most Rev. Steven J. Lopes, STD

On the Occasion of the Mass of Installation of  
Monsignor Carl Reid, PA



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Your Grace, Archbishop Fisher,  
Your Grace, Archbishop Coleridge,  
My Lord Bishops,  
Monsignor Reid,  
Dear brothers and sisters in Christ,

On these days of great celebration and significance, there is always a bit of pressure on the preacher to give adequate expression to the joy and anticipation in our hearts. God, whose grace at work in us can accomplish infinitely more than we can ask or even imagine, is doing great things in the Ordinariate of Our Lady of the Southern Cross, and in the priestly heart of her new shepherd, Monsignor Carl Reid. My task is to give voice to that grace and to our gratitude at what God is doing. Happily for me, Monsignor Reid has already indicated a direction in the choice of his motto *Lux benigna duce, Lead kindly light*, taken from the writings of the soon-to-be-Saint John Henry Cardinal Newman. As this phrase opens up onto an entire vista of faith, we would do well to reflect on it and see where it leads.

*Lead, Kindly Light, amid the encircling gloom. Lead Thou me on!*

Himself an accomplished preacher of the Gospel, Newman wrote major influential works on themes like Truth, the Church, Dogma, the Development of Doctrine, University Education, and the relationship between faith and reason. His was also a poet's heart, and *Lead, kindly light* is the opening line of his poem entitled "The Pillar of the Cloud" that was only later made into a popular hymn. The prose is charged with Newman's own profoundly personal sense of the presence and action of God amidst the changes and

vagaries of life. Indeed, Newman has a rather high view of how we can come to know God by the use of reason. He also has a high view of the Church as the pillar of cloud that leads us with the kindly light of truth revealed in Jesus Christ. For Newman the light of truth is the context for coming to know God, not as a notion, or an idea, nor even a philosophical construct, but as a Heart that speaks unto our hearts.

Thus, seeking the truth and loving all that is good and beautiful is the surest pathway by which we may know, love, and serve God, and so gain happiness with him in this world and the next. The light of revelation is a beacon, drawing us out of shadows and imaginations and into the surpassing beauty of a real relationship with the Father, in the Son, through the Holy Spirit. Stepping into the light—allowing it to embrace us with its warming rays and then sharing the light with others—well, that’s the Christian life, the response of faith. *Lead, kindly light, lead Thou me on.* This becomes the prayer of those human hearts who are not content with merely knowing something about God, but whose desire to know God shares in the desire of Him who so deeply desires to be known and to share communion with us. Heart speaks unto heart.

*Lead, Kindly Light — The night is dark, and I am far from home — Lead Thou me on!*

In the eyes of the world, Monsignor Carl, you and your wife Barb are far from home. You hear it said in the Church that discipleship is an adventure, and the deeper your vocational “yes” to the Lord, the greater the adventure! It’s fine to say that God’s grace at work in us can accomplish infinitely more than we can ask or even imagine, but it’s another thing when “not imagining it” means so many unanticipated twists and turns in life, changes in career, ministerial demands on our families, or being asked to move across Canada or even across the world! But, through it all, God’s grace is always at work. To meet that grace with openness of heart can bring superabundant richness and lasting happiness.

Husbands and wives know this, as marriage is a veritable master class in the unforeseen! As husbands and wives confront these twists and turns together, united and strengthened by grace from on high, the unforeseen can become the place where God’s loving presence is most intensely experienced and welcomed. And priests certainly know this too, as ministry always seems to push them out of what is comfortable and familiar, stretching them and revealing their utter dependence on God in the sometimes-utter futility of their human efforts. Faith is an adventure, yes, though sometimes we experience it more like wandering in the desert (though hopefully not for 40 years).

One thing we celebrate this evening in the inauguration of Monsignor Reid’s ministry is how the transformative power of God’s grace can be experienced through the humble response of faith. Taking up ministry in the Ordinariate dedicated to Our Lady of the Southern Cross, Monsignor has chosen to adorn his personal coat of arms with the lily evoking the Annunciation. This is both a reminder to himself and a pledge to you, the clergy and faithful of the Ordinariate, that he must always echo in his pastoral ministry the *fiat* of Mary. Her humble attitude of willing, docile faith would indeed take her far from home. She would experience herself stretched by the implications of her “yes” and her

Son's public ministry. She would know too the full darkness of night beneath the Cross of her son. And through it all she prays: *fiat, be it done unto me according to thy word.* Through that prayer, Mary gave the world its redeemer. What will Monsignor Carl give the Ordinariate through his daily *fiat*? What will the Ordinariate give to the whole Church if only her clergy and faithful embrace the adventure of discipleship?

*Lead, kindly light — Keep Thou my feet; I do not ask to see the distant scene — one step enough for me.*

Newman was a man of tremendous faith. I don't know about you, Monsignor Carl, but I for one ask the Lord to see the distant scene all the time! But in his mercy the Lord seems to ignore that frequent petition of mine.

The Ordinariate is young, very young in the sweep of Church history. As we approach the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the promulgation of the Apostolic Constitution *Anglicanorum coetibus*, the ecumenical vision of Pope Benedict XVI and Pope Francis is only beginning to take shape. At the same time, rather fundamental questions still loom. We are only beginning the demanding process of laying a foundation for the future flourishing of our mission diocese. The Ordinary and the Governing Council have to tackle seemingly innumerable questions of finance, policy, development, structure, real estate, and personnel. And all of this is so that our parochial communities can grow into the full stature of parish life envisioned by the Apostolic Constitution. My predecessor, Monsignor Jeffrey Steenson, compared life in the Ordinariate to building an airplane while also trying to fly it...it takes a lot of duct tape! It is not always easy or even possible to see where this is all headed.

We in the Ordinariate have been given a privileged share in the Church's mission of communion and evangelization. I would therefore like to propose that we are to engage that mission *one step at a time* precisely as the way forward. An essential facet of that mission is preserving and promoting the patrimony of Anglican and English Christianity. Another essential part of the mission—one dear to the heart of Pope Benedict, I might add—is the ecumenical value of the Ordinariate. On the personal level, the Ordinariate provides people with a welcome reception into full communion with the Catholic Church in a way that is perhaps not so overwhelming to people coming out of a Protestant tradition. More globally, the Ordinariate demonstrates that unity with the Catholic Church does not mean assimilation and uniformity. Rather, unity in the expression of the truth of the Catholic faith allows for a vibrant diversity in the expression of that same faith. The Ordinariate does essentially that.

Pope Francis has gone to great lengths to underscore the missionary and evangelical character of the Ordinariate as well, and I would urge you to see his appointment of a new Ordinary here in that light. We have been given extraordinary tools for evangelization: the confidence of Catholic doctrine and sacramental Order; the profound beauty of our liturgy; the rich heritage of our English patrimony; the transparency and accountability built into our governance structure; a joyful narrative about the communion of the Church that we extend to our brothers and sisters who long for the abundant life of Christ without even

knowing it. We would, on the other hand, betray our mission and our very identity if we thought that, once in the Church, our work is done. No. The Ordinariate may yet be small but we have been equipped in every way to be mighty. We might not be able to see the future, but if we use the tools we have been given to make more and better Catholics for the glory of God, we will be an enlivening presence in the Church with a bright future indeed.

*Lead, kindly light — I was not ever thus, nor pray'd that Thou shouldst lead me on. I loved to choose and see my path, but now lead Thou me on!*

Only by following the Gospel path of ongoing conversion will the mission of the Ordinariate and the ministry of its new Ordinary be shown to be authentic and authentically Catholic. Indeed, the first words of our Lord's public ministry as given by both the Evangelists Matthew and Mark are the call to conversion: *The Kingdom of God is at hand—repent and believe in the Gospel!* This is no casual phrase, but rather the key that unlocks all of Jesus' preaching and teaching. Repent, *metanoiete* in the Greek, is not simply a renunciation of something but a radical change of mind and heart, a literal turning (a *conversio*) of the whole of our self towards God, a turning that involves a reordering of our priorities, a reevaluation of our human relationships, and most fundamentally a purification of our desires. If we take the Gospel seriously, conversion is central to what it means to be a Christian. And, as this call inaugurates Gospel preaching, so too is it woven through the end of St. John's Gospel which we heard proclaimed just moments ago.

The Risen Lord appears to his disciples and says to Peter: "Simon, son of John, do you love me more than these? Then feed my sheep." Three times the Lord asks, and three times Peter responds positively and is given the added admonition to pastor the flock of God. Several of the Fathers of the Church saw great significance in Peter's three-fold profession of love, repairing in some way the damage of his three-fold denial of Christ on the night of Holy Thursday. There is something deeper at work, something that evidences Peter's own ongoing conversion to the Lord. English uses the word "love" both for the Lord's question and Peter's response. But, as you may know, Greek has several words for love: *agape*, *philia*, and *eros* principally, which denote different expressions of love and varying degrees of intensity. Pope Benedict XVI offers a profound reflection on the meaning of these words in his Encyclical Letter *Deus caritas est*, noting that *philia* expresses the love of friendship, while *agape* is the new and distinctly Christian word for love, one charged with all the power and totality of self-gift revealed in the Lord's cross. For our purposes, it is enough to notice that Jesus and Peter are using different words, as if they were talking past each other.

Essentially, Jesus says to Peter, do you *agape* me, Peter? The response is: yes, Lord, you know that I *philia* you. And so also the second time. Only the third time does the Lord "condescend" to Peter's level and ask *Do you philia me, Peter?* so that the question can meet an adequate response.

Now, I have a very high regard for the Prince of the Apostles... my Ordinariate in North America claims him as our principal patron. I would like to think that in his response

to the Risen Lord he is expressing the highest aspirations of the human heart. Yet a further conversion is needed for Peter to express in his own person the totality of self-gift, the sacrificial love of Christ for the Church. It is a conversion that, yes, even *transcends* the highest aspirations of the human heart, which is perhaps why we see the interplay of these two words for love at this point in the Gospel. You see, this exchange occurs before Pentecost. Peter needed the gift of the Holy Spirit for this conversion to be accomplished in him. The Spirit, poured out from the throne of God and the Lamb, is the divine fire that transforms what it touches into Christ. This Holy Spirit, who conforms our hearts to Christ in Baptism and Confirmation, works in the further configuration of Holy Orders. Conversion to Christ is not something *we do* or can accomplish. If we were to try, we would only wind up talking past the Lord. Conversion happens in us when we open our hearts to the grace of God, freely given, and to what the Holy Spirit can accomplish in and through us when, like Mary, we stand before the Lord in docility and say “yes.”

So tonight is also about conversion, about celebrating what the Holy Spirit is accomplishing in and through us as he draws us closer to the Eucharistic heart of Christ Jesus the Lord. It is a celebration of what the Holy Spirit is accomplishing in and through the Ordinariate of Our Lady of the Southern Cross. We offer thanksgiving for the new vitality of the Church in this land through the fulsome expression of Catholic faith in the new and felicitous idiom that the Ordinariate offers. Conversion leads to an urgent sense of mission, because conformity to Christ includes an interiorization of his mission drawing people into the communion of the Blessed Trinity. Even our missional desire—to make more and better Catholics—is born of our conversion to Christ.

Tonight we celebrate what the Holy Spirit is accomplishing in and through Carl Reid, in his personal discipleship and in his priesthood lived always in and for the Church. Monsignor, this Gospel reading for your installation day will resound in your ears each and every day: *Do you love me, Carl?* Your life and ministry among the clergy and faithful of this Ordinariate is a concrete response to that question, precisely the tending of the sheep that the Lord demands. For this, your heart will need daily conversion, supported by our daily prayers. May your love for the Lord be ever purified, so that it authentically expresses the agape of Christ on the cross.

*Lead kindly light... So long Thy power hath blest me, sure it still will lead me on, o'er moor and fen, o'er crag and torrent, till the night is gone; and with the morn those angel faces smile which I have loved long since, and lost awhile.*

Dear friends, we are engaged together in seeing a new thing, a great work of God's Providence. His power having blessed the beginnings of this Ordinariate, has worked through the wise and capable leadership of Monsignor Harry Entwistle, and has chosen to bless even now Monsignor Carl Reid at this inauguration of his pastoral ministry in Australia. Do not be afraid of the darkness of night nor overwhelmed by the seeming difficulties on the road ahead. Look rather to the Light, to Christ risen from the dead, and let the joy of his presence animate your discipleship and your mission.

Know also that you are supported by your brothers and sisters in the Ordinariate in North America as well as in the UK. As together we advance this privileged vision of Catholic communion, we pray together and with confidence: *Lead, kindly light! Lead Thou me on!*