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Reverend Scantlebury Named Bishop-Elect of Bridgetown, Barbados

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The Reverend Niel Scantlebury

ST. THOMAS — A Roman Catholic priest who has ministered to the faithful at several churches in the Virgin Islands since his ordination more than two decades ago has been tapped as the next bishop of the catholic church in Bridgetown, Barbados.

The Reverend Niel Scantlebury becomes the first Barbados-born bishop to lead the catholic church in his native home. His installation is scheduled for March 17, 2021, the feast day of St. Patrick and will be held at St. Patrick's Cathedral in Bridgetown. Scantlebury will succeed Archbishop Jason Gordon who has been the diocesan administrator for the catholic church in Barbados since his appointment as Archbishop of Port of Spain in 2017.

Scantlebury was born and educated in Barbados and earned a mechanical engineering degree from St. Augustine University before moving to the Virgin Islands to teach religion at Sts. Peter and Paul Catholic School.

He was ordained to the priesthood in 1995, and four years later, earned a master of arts degree in sacred scripture. He is presently assigned to St. Ann's Catholic Church in Barrenspot, St. Croix. He previously led the faithful at Holy Family Catholic Church and at Sts. Peter and Paul Cathedral on St. Thomas, and Our Lady of Mount Carmel on St. John. Scantlebury has held membership on several boards and committees of the church in the V.I. including an administrative board for child protection.

The announcement of Scantlebury's selection as bishop was made by the Vatican a week ago and has been warmly embraced by the faithful in the Virgin Islands, many of whom have been a part of his ministry from his days as a religion teacher at the catholic school, seminarian, priest, and now as bishop-elect.

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