

Lambeth Palace London SE1 7JU

PRIVATE AND CONFIDENTIAL

21st October 1991

Dear John

See of Gloucester

As a result of the resignation of the Bishop of Gloucester, the Rt. Revd. John Yates, to join my staff at Lambeth a new Bishop is required for the diocese of Gloucester. The Crown Appointments Commission met on 15th/16th October and decided to recommend for your consideration the names of the [Name Redacted] [Name Redacted] and the Rt. Revd. Peter John Ball, CGA, Suffragan Bishop of Lewes. The Commission expressed a preference for the former by eight votes to four.

[Name Redacted] is DPA. Throughout his ministry, he has been held in high regard and seen as someone who had major contributions to make to Church life. In most of the posts he has filled he has faced and overcome difficult challenges. He was a real success as parish priest and [Name Redacted], and did well as [Name Redacted]. His keen interest in the growth of ministry and his continuous support for clergy were well reflected in the thesis which gained him his M.Sc.: [DPA] [DPA]

As a person he has an infectious personality, outgoing and enthusiastic. A man of growing presence, he is a good preacher whose preaching is well grounded in Biblical theology and spirituality, a fluent speaker and an able administrator. He moves as easily in secular public life as in ecclesiastical settings.

His capacity for successful and creative leadership has been evident in the diocese's efforts in the follow-up to "Faith in the City" and its fund raising for the Church Urban Fund.

DPA

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Peter Ball (twin brother of the Bishop of Truro) is 59. Before he became a bishop the major and formative feature of his ministry was the establishment and leadership (with his brother) of the Community of the Glorious Ascension but he also had two spells of parish ministry during that period, thus emphasizing the importance of parish life in his ministry.

He has an originality of outlook and an urgency to seek out God in all aspects of life that keeps him open to new possibilities and makes him acceptable to people of all traditions. He is loved for his humility and simplicity of life - he maintains the rigorous personal discipline of a monk - for the quality of his teaching and preaching and for his impish, twinkling sense of humour. He has great physical and mental stamina, and leads by example and inspiration. He has a remarkable reputation as an evangelist, and he has particularly winning ways with the young and the unchurched.

Peter Ball has the gift of communicating with people of all ages and backgrounds, men and women alike, so that he is as much valued by youth groups in down town areas as by the leaders of society - Lord Lieutenant, MP's and Mayors - in East Sussex, notably exemplified by his pastoral care and public courage at the time of Ian Gow's murder. Although a bachelor he has always been a most generous host, at times almost making his home into a welcoming community.

Each of these bishops has very different gifts from the other and I am clear that each would have much to contribute in Gloucester. Bishop Peter would bring a marvellous quality of inspiration, vision and purpose, a sense of renewal which would be much valued. Bishop Name Redacted strength would lie in guiding the diocese through change by making sure that it faced up to its challenges and translated ideas into action continuously. Each in his own way would make his mark in the total community, something that the diocese has especially emphasized.

With warm wishes

DPA

The Rt. Hon. John Major MP
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