

# DIOCESE OF NOTTINGHAM



## **Catholic Multi-Academy Trusts**

### The Members

September 2025

## **Rt Rev Patrick McKinney, STL**

*Bishop of Nottingham*

Bishop Patrick McKinney was brought up in Birmingham and was ordained to the priesthood on 29 July 1978.

Between 1982 and 1984, he studied for a Licence in Sacred Theology in the Pontifical Gregorian University in Rome. Returning to the Archdiocese of Birmingham, he taught fundamental theology in St Mary's College, Oscott until 1989, when he was appointed Rector, a post he held for nine years, during which period he was also a lecturer in ecclesiology, the theology of the Church.

He went on to serve as Parish Priest of a number of parishes in the Archdiocese of Birmingham and as an Episcopal Vicar for Staffordshire for a number of years. During this time he served as a foundation governor and chair of governors in a number of Catholic primary schools and as chaplain to a large secondary school in the Archdiocese of Birmingham. He was made a Prelate of Honour in 1990 and a member of the Metropolitan Chapter of St Chad in 1992. He also served for a time as chair of the Birmingham Archdiocesan Commission for Inter-Religious Dialogue.

On 14 May 2015, he was appointed tenth Bishop of Nottingham by Pope Francis and was ordained to the episcopate by Cardinal Vincent Nichols (Archbishop of Westminster) in St Barnabas' Cathedral, Nottingham on 3 July 2015.

## **Rev Canon Paul Chipchase, BA DMS STB**

*Episcopal Vicar for Finance and Administration*

Father Paul was born in Glossop, Derbyshire in 1953 and educated at St Mary's Primary, Xaverian College, Manchester and the Universities of Exeter, Manchester and the Angelicum in Rome.

He worked in Local Government for nineteen years before being accepted to train for the priesthood at the Pontifical Beda College in Rome.

Ordained at the church of the Immaculate Conception, Charlesworth in 1997, he has served in seven parishes in the Nottingham diocese and is currently Parish Priest of Sacred Heart, Loughborough. He is also Episcopal Vicar (Finance and Administration) for the diocese.

## **Rev Father Simon Gillespie, LLB, BD, MA, JCL**

*Episcopal Vicar for Catholic Education*

Father Simon Gillespie is the Bishop's Personal Secretary and the Episcopal Vicar for Catholic Education. He has previously worked in the parishes of Our Lady of Victories, Southwell and Saint Anthony, Calverton, Saint Mary and Saint Augustine, Stamford, Saint Thomas More, Leicester, Saint Philip Neri, Mansfield, and Saint Peter and Saint Paul, Lincoln.

Prior to his ordination in 2012, Simon lived within the Cathedral parish, Nottingham and worked in the legal profession, specialising in property law. He recently completed a licence in Canon Law through the Catholic University of Leuven, Belgium (2021), having graduated with a Civil Law degree from the University of Manchester (1997) and a Canon Law degree from the University of London (2008). Father Simon studied for the priesthood in Saint Alban's seminary, Valladolid and Allen Hall seminary, London, together with a year at the Institute of Saint Anselm, Kent.

As well as parish duties, Father Simon helps to organise the annual Diocesan Lourdes Pilgrimage, is one of the Defenders of the Bond in the Nottingham Tribunal. He edits the Diocesan Yearbook, the Diocesan Ordo, the Nottingham section of the National Catholic Yearbook and compiles the diocesan pastoral statistics. He has served as a foundation governor and chair of governors on various school local governing bodies, and was Chair of the Saint Gilbert of Sempringham MAT Board prior to its dissolution. In his spare time, he is Group Scout Leader for a Catholic Scout Group in Nottingham and maintains links with his *alma mater*, Heythrop College, University of London.

## **Laura O'Brien, BA**

Laura was born in Eldoret, Kenya where she attended the Loreto Convent school, she moved to England in 1975. Laura was a pupil at St Joseph's Catholic primary school in Leicester and then St Paul's.

Laura is a qualified early years and primary Montessori teacher. She has a degree in early years and holds EYP status. Laura is the owner/manager of her own Montessori nursery which has been running for over 20 years. Alongside managing and working in the nursery, Laura also acts as a mentor for other nurseries through her relationship with Leicestershire County Council as an initial mentor practitioner.

Laura has been an active PTA member of both St Joseph's and St Paul's when her children were at the schools and has been a foundation governor at St Paul's Catholic School in Leicester for many years, most of which as chair. Laura served as a foundation director on the Corpus Christi Catholic Academy Trust and is a current director of the NRCDES board.

Laura is a parishioner at St Joseph's parish in Leicester where she used to help run the children's liturgy group when her children were younger and worked with First Holy Communion and Confirmation groups. She now sings and plays the guitar at Mass.



## **Mary Robson** BA (Hons), DMS, FCIPD

Mary was born and raised as a farmer's daughter in East Yorkshire. She attended the University of Nottingham to study and has remained in the city to raise her family.

Mary undertook her post graduate studies at Trent University and became a fellow of the Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development in 2003. She has enjoyed a successful career in Human Resources which has spanned all sectors of education and local government. Her most recent position prior to her well-earned retirement was as a HR Director for the Diocese of Nottingham CMATs.

Mary also has extensive experience of governance and whilst her children were young, worked as a Clerk to Governors at South Nottingham Catholic Academy Trust. Since this appointment, she has continued to dedicate herself to governance and also serves as a Trustee of a large MAT in Nottingham. She is committed to Catholic education and the fundamental principles that underpin the ethos of our Diocesan schools.

Mary has many interests outside of work commitments and enjoys spending time with her husband and three grown up children. She loves to travel and is a keen sportswoman enjoying tennis and skiing.