



**A MESSAGE TO THE CLERGY, RELIGIOUS AND LAY FAITHFUL
OF THE DIOCESES OF HALLAM, LEEDS AND MIDDLESBROUGH**

My Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

Following the resignation of the Right Reverend Ralph Heskett C.Ss.R. as Bishop of Hallam, His Holiness Pope Leo XIV has appointed me as the Apostolic Administrator of the Diocese of Hallam. This appointment is in addition to my office as Bishop of Leeds and my responsibilities as the Apostolic Administrator of the Diocese of Middlesbrough.

I feel very humbled by the trust which His Holiness has placed in me with these appointments.

The Holy Father has requested that I begin a consultation with the clergy, religious and lay faithful of the Diocese of Hallam about a possible reunification with the Diocese of Leeds, from part of which Hallam was created in May 1980.

While the potential changes that we are being asked to study together may present us with challenges, they will also offer us opportunities to strengthen our service of the mission which Christ has entrusted to His Church and to renew our vigour in responding to the work of evangelisation.

Let us give thanks to Almighty God for the ministry that Bishop Heskett has given so devotedly as Shepherd of the Diocese of Hallam over the past twelve years and pray that the Lord will grant him health and strength as he begins his retirement from office as a Diocesan Ordinary.

I ask you kindly to keep me in your prayers and pray too for all the people of our Dioceses. As we explore together the future for our local Churches, may Christ Our Lord send the Holy Spirit into our minds and hearts to guide us and grant us the gift of wisdom.

With the assurance of my prayers and every blessing, I remain,

Yours in the Lord Jesus Christ,

+ Marcus

✠ Marcus Stock
Bishop of Leeds