

Bishops discuss long-term priorities at meeting in Leeds

The bishops' conference of England and Wales was expected to discuss its most basic priorities this week at a meeting that may lead to a shake-up of Eccleston Square, its administrative headquarters in central London.



A source close to the conference said the bishops would seek to map out aims for the next five to 10 years and that resources at the secretariat may be reorganised.

It is understood that the bishops would consider what the fundamental purpose of the conference, which was established in the 1980s, should be.

The meeting at Hinsley Hall in Leeds was for the first time attended by Mgr Keith Newton, head of the Personal Ordinariate of Our Lady of Walsingham. The first married member of the bishops' conference, he spoke about the progress of the ordinariate.

Other items on the agenda were the new translation of the Roman Missal, which will be introduced into parishes in September, and the campaign to add religious education to the English Baccalaureate.

Archbishop Antonio Mennini, the new Apostolic Nuncio to Great Britain, also addressed the bishops for the first time. He focused on the urgent task of evangelising a highly secularised society. He also thanked Archbishop Vincent Nichols of Westminster for his welcome and for showing "a kind British hospitality" by meeting him upon arrival at Heathrow airport.

Pope Benedict XVI, he said, was grateful for the bishops' hospitality last September, and had reminded him to ask them to be "generous" in implementing *Anglicanorum coetibus*.

The nuncio also mentioned the new Mass translation, saying it was a "great opportunity to look once again, along with our priests and people, at the liturgy and to grow in our understanding".

He added: "It is also a time for sensitivity towards those persons who are perhaps less enthusiastic about this, because we, as well as the faithful, do not always find change easy."

By Mark Greaves - CatholicHerald