

# New Arch to put jobs and religion first

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By Thabo Mabaso

Theological education, rural development and unemployment are some of the issues the new Archbishop of Cape Town has close to his heart.

The Anglican Church has elected Thabo Makgoba, 47, to succeed Njongonkulu Ndungane as leader of its southern Africa region, making him one of the youngest bishops in history to ascend the position.

Makgoba, who is currently the Bishop of Grahamstown, pipped Unisa principal Barney Pityana and the Bishop of Pretoria, Jo Seoka, to the post.

In the run-up to the elections, sources said the more high profile Pityana was likely to get the nod ahead of the two other candidates.

However, Makgoba triumphed and will assume his duties at the beginning of next year.

As Archbishop of Southern Africa, Makgoba will lead a parish of more than three million worshippers spread across South Africa, Lesotho, Swaziland, Mozambique, Namibia and the island of St Helena.

An emotional Makgoba said he was overwhelmed by his election.

He preferred not to provide details of the priorities he wanted to set during his tenure, but rather first study the current position of the church in society.

"Watch this space. The archbishop does not work alone. I will look at where the church is at and the context it is working in."

Makgoba, who is a qualified psychologist, follows in the footsteps of Ndungane and Nobel Peace prize laureate Archbishop Emeritus Desmond Tutu.

His predecessors enjoy immense international standing and a reputation for championing causes that aim to alleviate poverty and underdevelopment in the Third World.

Makgoba said the causes that he has a passion for were "theological education, rural development, alleviating unemployment, maternal and infant deaths".

Makgoba is married and has two children. He was ordained in 1990 and has a masters degree in Applied and Educational Psychology from the University of the Witwatersrand.

He is currently completing his doctoral studies at the University of Cape Town.

Bishop David Beetge, who chaired the Anglican Church elective assembly, said Makgoba was victorious only after two rounds of voting.

The elective assembly's rules dictate that to be declared a winner, a candidate has to gain a two thirds majority.

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