

Youthful leader for Anglican Church

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By Quinton Mtyala

Thabo Makgoba, 47, is to replace Njongonkulu Ndungane as head of Southern Africa's Anglican Church.

Acting head David Beetge said Makgoba won the church elective council's vote for archbishop of Cape Town in the second ballot.

Johannes Seoka of the Pretoria diocese and Unisa vice-rector Barney Pityana were the other candidates.

Beetge said the result of the vote would cause "great jubilation throughout the Anglican community".

Members of the church in South Africa, Angola, Mozambique, Swaziland, Lesotho, and St Helena were consulted.

Of his elevation to head of the church, Makgoba, a father of two, said, "They're very big shoes and big mitres to fill" - a reference to Ndungane and his predecessor, Archbishop Emeritus Desmond Tutu.

Asked his social agenda and the direction in which he would take the church, Makgoba said these would be decided once he took office.

"The archbishop does not work alone - we'll look at where the church is going. Theological education, rural development and infant mortality were some of the issues that informed me in my rural diocese."

Makgoba's rise to the top has been rapid. He was installed as Bishop of Grahamstown as recently as February 14.

At the time, he undertook to keep to his priorities of poverty eradication, HIV and Aids, land reform - including responsible use of church land - loss of life through crime, the invasion of Iraq, and terrorist activities, "quiet diplomacy in Zimbabwe", and overcrowding in prisons.

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