

## Archbishop Nichols appointed to Congregation for Bishops



Pope Francis has appointed Archbishop Vincent Nichols to the Congregation for Bishops, a move that will see the Archbishop of Westminster's influence in the Church rise hugely.

The appointment means that Archbishop Nichols will take part in regular meetings at the powerful "Thursday table" in Rome to recommend Episcopal appointments.

He said: "It is a privilege to assist in the important task of appointing Bishops and I am honoured to have been asked to undertake this role by Pope Francis. I look forward to making whatever contribution I can to the work of the Apostolic See."

Pope Francis appointed Cardinal Donald Wuerl of Washington to join the congregation and dropped Cardinal Raymond Burke. The former Archbishop of St Louis, seen as a prominent conservative, was appointed to the Congregation by Benedict XVI in 2009, but was not confirmed as president of the Apostolic Signatura, the Vatican's highest court. Francis also dropped Cardinal Justin Rigali, emeritus

of Philadelphia, Cardinal Angelo Bagnasco of Genoa, the formidable president of the Italian bishops' conference.

The 73-year-old Cardinal Wuerl is already a member of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, and a veteran of the Curia who oversaw the Congregation for the Clergy.

Among the other new members named on Monday were cardinals from Germany, Italy, and Brazil Francis' prefect of Religious, Brazilian Cardinal Joao Braz de Aviz. Francis also confirmed 18 existing members of the congregation, including Cardinal George Pell of Sydney.

Ed West - The Catholic Herald