

LUC TERLINDEN, BRUSSELS FRATERNITY, ARCHBISHOP OF BRUSSELS-MALINES

Luc Terlinden, the current Vicar General of the Archdiocese of Mechelen-Brussels, was presented this afternoon as the new archbishop.

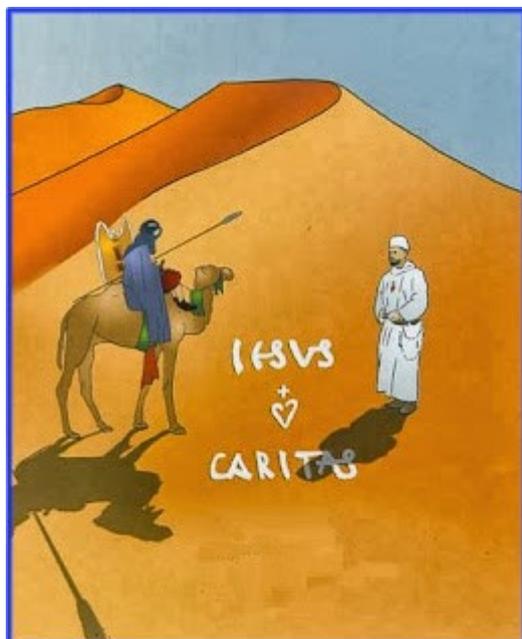
For the first time in almost a century (since Cardinal Van Roey in 1926), a priest who is not yet a bishop is named archbishop. Therefore, Luc Terlinden from Brussels is not yet very well known to the general public. For the last two years, as Vicar General of the Archdiocese of Mechelen-Brussels, he has been the right hand of the current Archbishop, Jozef De Kesel. Terlinden is the tenth archbishop since the creation of independent Belgium. With Terlinden's appointment, the Holy See is already following the principle of alternately naming a Flemish and French speaker.

Terlinden is 54 years old. That seems young, but that is completely in line with the age of his predecessors - Danneels was 46 years old - and of the archbishops who are named in other parts of the world.



Youth Ministry

Terlinden only made the move to the seminary after his studies in economics and after some work experience in education.



She then followed a specialization in moral theology in Rome. For her doctoral thesis, she studied the writings of spiritual teachers such as Charles Taylor and John Henry Newman. He gained pastoral experience in parishes and youth ministry, which left him with a lasting commitment to the Brussels Marolles and to young people (in student ministry in Louvain-La-Neuve and as co-founder of Pôle Jeunes XL in Ixelles). In 2017, he became president of the French-speaking diocesan seminary and a member of the bishop's council. In 2021 Terlinden became Vicar General of the Archdiocese of Mechelen-Brussels. It's a steep climb for someone who leads a very simple life as a member of the priestly fraternity of Charles de Foucauld, a French priest who came to live among the Tuareg in Algeria at the turn of the 20th century.

Kesel's right hand

As Vicar General of the Archdiocese of Mechelen-Brussels, Terlinden became Cardinal Jozef De Kesel's right-hand man and a central figure in the Archdiocese. Since then he has lived with his dachshund Oscar in Mechelen. People who know him well call him a

bright, collegiate and hard-working man, who has a brotherly attitude and can also stop once in a while to enjoy life.

In an interview on Kerk & Leven (April 7, 2021), Terlinden said that the World Youth Days in Rome in the year 2000 were a profound experience for him, like a military pilgrimage to Lourdes during his military service. He was raised in the faith and considered becoming a priest at a young age, but the obligation of celibacy made him hesitate.

Synod on synodality

As archbishop, Terlinden wants to focus on synodality. Cardinal De Kesel played an important role in the continental synod through his input on how to deal with modern and secularized society and as a bridge figure. We can assume that his successor will also take charge of that torch.

He said of celibacy at Church & Life in 2021: 'We are also learning more and more that priesthood and celibacy are not necessarily the same thing. I believe in the great value of celibacy, but we often forget that the vocation to celibacy is an exception. The media focuses a lot on the celibate priesthood, but our Church has several vocations within it. Now it's about going together on the road.'

In September, Luc Terlinden awaits episcopal consecration first, to assume his functions as archbishop on September 3, 2023.

