On New Year’s Day three former Anglican Bishops were received in a low key ceremony into the Roman Catholic Church – John Broadhurst of Fulham, Andrew Burnham of Ebbsfleet and Keith Newton of Richborough – along with their wives and three Anglican nuns from the Marian shrine at Walsingham. Bishop Hopes, himself a former Anglican and Episcopal delegate of behalf of the commission of the Bishops’ Conference of England and Wales for the implementation of the Ordinariate, presided. The ordinary chosen is the former Bishop of Richborough, Keith Newton. He will only be ordained a priest but will be in charge of the ordinariate and will have a seat at the meetings of the Roman Catholic Bishops of England and Wales.

The three bishops were ordained to the diaconate on 13th January and to the priesthood on January 15th. With Archbishop Nichols presiding.

An Anglican spokesman said that he just did not know how many would come over into the ordinariate. There are, however, expected to be 50 Anglican clergy and two retired Anglican bishops along with 35 parish groups. Their parishes will be personal and not territorial. A principal church for the ordinariate, large enough to accommodate large gatherings of people on special occasions, will be found, though this has not yet happened.

Joe Mulrooney
4th. Feb 2011