

## Memorial service for Paddington Bear author at St Paul's Cathedral



St Paul's Cathedral in London hosted a memorial service for Michael Bond CBE, creator of Paddington Bear yesterday (Tuesday) morning.

The English author, who penned more than 200 books, died in June, aged 91, following a short illness.

The service came a week after Bond's new book was announced at St. Paul's.

In *Paddington At St Paul's*, chaos ensues when the bear is mistaken for a choirboy during a visit to the London landmark.

Bond's daughter, Karen Jankel, said during the announcement: "If the outpouring of wonderful messages of condolence we received from my father's fans is anything to go by, there will be many people who will be delighted to learn there is another *Paddington* book to look forward to. "Our family feel immensely proud that we will be honouring his life at St Paul's Cathedral and the fact that this is the setting for his final story makes it very special indeed."

HarperCollins Children's Books executive publisher Ann-Janine Murtagh added: "We are deeply honoured to be publishing the final *Paddington* story from our most cherished author, Michael Bond.

"*Paddington At St Paul's* is Michael's parting gift to all his fans - a simply classic *Paddington* story, brimming with curiosity, charm and affectionate exuberance."

Bond became a beloved giant of children's literature after his first book, *A Bear Called Paddington*, was published in 1958, about the bear from Peru who loves marmalade.

## **Budget welcomed, but talks failure lamented by Presbyterian Church**

As the Secretary of State introduced a Budget Bill for Northern Ireland on Monday, the Very Rev. Dr. Norman Hamilton, Presbyterian Church in Ireland's convener of its Council for Public Affairs, welcomed the move, but has lamented the inability of elected representatives to reach a political agreement and set a budget at Stormont.

Dr. Hamilton said, "The introduction of a budget for Northern Ireland, even if it comes via Westminster, is to be welcomed as it will hopefully bring financial stability and alleviate some of the strain that education, many community and voluntary groups and the NHS in particular are under at the present time. Nevertheless, like many today, we find it deeply frustrating and profoundly disappointing that after all this time an agreement to end the political deadlock that would have seen the restoration of a good quality, accountable and stable local administration has not been found.

"As a Church we acknowledge the ongoing challenges involved in restoring the institutions.

But we are also mindful that after 10 months of negotiations resulting in the current deadlock, great damage has been done to the credibility of the institutions themselves. Inevitably, many of those most affected include victims and survivors alongside vulnerable citizens of all ages.

“It is a moral imperative that their needs are not held hostage to political failure. While today’s budget is much needed, it should not let all of us off the hook - elected leaders, or civic society - in terms of redoubling efforts to make the current institutions work properly, or bring forward new ideas to achieve stable and good quality accountable government. This is of added importance given the inability of Northern Ireland leaders to be at the heart of the Brexit debates.”

## **Two new priests ordained to replace 15 that died in Dublin last year**

Archbishop Diarmuid Martin is set to ordain two men into the priesthood tomorrow, bringing the total number ordained in the diocese since 2004 to 16.

Although the two new priests will not be enough to replace the 15 who died over the past year, Martin said that “faith is not about numbers”.

He said: “Statistics and numbers are important, but they are not the entire picture.”

The two men set to be ordained are Corkman James Daly and Kildare native Bill O’Shaughnessy.

Daly worked in local government for several years before taking a career break in 2000 and worked in the US as a young minister. He studied at Mater Dei Institute of Education when he returned to Ireland, and graduated in 2007.

He was appointed a parish pastoral worker by the Dublin archdiocese in 2008, before enrolling at the seminary in Rome. He’s been appointed to the parish of Skerries.

O’Shaughnessy studied history and theology in the Pontifical University Maynooth, and graduated with a BA in Arts in 2009. He entered the seminary in 2012, earning a BA in Divinity in 2013 and became a deacon in 2016.

He served in St Matthews parish in Ballyfermot last year but has since been appointed to the Springfield and Jobstown parishes in Tallaght.

Both will be ordained alongside a number of deacons and parish pastoral workers in Dublin's Pro Cathedral at 11am tomorrow.

Martin added: "We can speak of 78% of Irish people who registered as Catholic at the recent census. We can use the same census figures to note a significant increase in the numbers of young men and women who no longer wish to be recognised as Catholics.

Faith is not about numbers. What is vital is the quality of the life of faith that dwells in our hearts.

## **Garden of Remembrance was unveiled at St Philip's Church, Milltown, Dublin**

A beautiful Garden of Remembrance was unveiled at St Philip's Church, Milltown, on Remembrance Sunday (November 12).

Archbishop Michael Jackson dedicated the new Garden of Remembrance, which is in a peaceful location at the rear of the church, following the Service of Remembrance.

The project, which has come to fruition during the church's 150th anniversary, has been in the

pipeline for some years and the Rector, Canon Sonia Gyles, thanked all who had helped progress the plan. She paid particular tribute to Joanna O'Reilly and Stephen Odlum who she described as the driving force and also thanked the architect Peter Nichels, the builder Vincent Hatton and the landscaper Ian Kelly.

Remembrance was the theme of the Archbishop's sermon and he paid tribute to the people whose dedication and commitment to memory itself kept the memory of service in war and peace alive. "As new generations come through, as adults and children inevitably find themselves at a further and further remove from what they find and read in history textbooks, the people who remind them and us that these things in fact happened and that these people from your community and mine served and died are to be lauded for their commitment to memory and to remembrance as history moves forward and onward and sweeps us with it," he said.

Archbishop Jackson said that remembrance brought together sadness and gratitude – sadness because of the lives cut short and gratitude because of the selflessness shown by those who gave their lives. He said keeping the memory alive was life-giving because it shaped

a community of freedom that everyone hopes would be the outcome of conflict.

The Archbishop said he had watched the Garden of Remembrance grow at St Philp's Church. He said the work that had gone into it had been careful and tasteful. "It is painstaking and will enable us in a changed and different world to remember with thanksgiving those whom we love who are now no longer with us. In a tight space and in a parish complex where lots of things happen in the parish community and in the wider community every day, there will be time for reflection in the context of lots going on around us. And that is no bad thing because the people we remember were undoubtedly part of the action and that is how we like to remember them," he added.

## **Ecumenical Canon and Organist Emeritus honoured in Armagh**

On Sunday 12th November 2017, Revd Tony Davidson who is Minister of First Armagh Presbyterian Church, was installed as an Ecumenical Canon in St Patrick's Cathedral, Armagh.



### **The conferral of the title of Organist Emeritus on Lay Canon Martin White.**

The preacher at the service was the Cathedral's other Ecumenical Canon, Dom Mark–Ephrem Nolan. Tony Davidson has been Minister of First Armagh Presbyterian Church since 1994. He is well-known across the City of Armagh for his work with the other Christian Churches, and across the community. He is a former President of the Irish Council of Churches.

Also at the service Lay Canon Martin White was conferred with the title 'Organist Emeritus'. Martin was Organist and Master of the Choristers from 1968–2002. During this time, he maintained and developed the choir of men and boys through the worst years of the 'Troubles', as well as inspiring countless young people

through his educational work at the Music Centre in Portadown.

## **Full celebratory peal to sound from Westminster Abbey where royal couple wed**

Bells will ring out at the historic church where the Queen married the Duke of Edinburgh, 70 years to the day that the royal couple said their vows.

On their platinum wedding anniversary, a full celebratory peal will sound from Westminster Abbey, where the 21-year-old future monarch Princess Elizabeth walked up the aisle to marry her dashing Greek and Danish prince in 1947.

At 1pm on Monday November 20, the Abbey's Company of Ringers will begin a complicated peal consisting of 5,070 changes or sequences, with the 70 a nod to the special anniversary.

It will take the team of 10 ringers around three hours and 20 minutes to complete, as they deliver the tribute without a break.



It is a historic tradition that the Abbey bells are rung for significant royal occasions and anniversaries, and the Queen is the first British monarch to celebrate a platinum wedding anniversary.

The fairy-tale royal wedding was a morale boost in the tough years that followed the Second World War and millions of people tuned in to listen to the ceremony on the wireless.

Royals and dignitaries gathered inside the Abbey, waiting for the young royal bride, whose Norman Hartnell wedding dress was hand-embroidered with more than 10,000 pearls and crystals.

War-time leader Winston Churchill summed up the occasion as "a flash of colour on the hard road we travel".

For austerity reasons, very little extra seating was provided inside the gothic Abbey, with the number of guests kept to 2,000.

In contrast to later royal weddings, the only flowers in the Abbey were in large vases either side of the High Altar filled with white lilies and chrysanthemums, pink carnations, roses, variegated ivy and camellia foliage.

The Grave of the Unknown Warrior was the only stone that was not covered by the special carpet.

The day after the wedding, Princess Elizabeth followed a royal tradition started by her mother of sending her wedding bouquet back to the Abbey to be laid on the grave.

Less than five years later, the Princess became Queen Elizabeth II on the death of her father George VI and now 91 and having reigned for more than 65 years, she is Britain's longest reigning monarch.



The Abbey is also where the Queen was crowned in 1953, and where the funerals of the Queen Mother and Diana, Princess of Wales were held, and where the Duke and Duchess of Cambridge married in 2011.

Elizabeth II has maintained a close connection to the church, which is a Royal Peculiar and subject only to the sovereign and not to any archbishop nor bishop.

The Queen and Philip attended thanksgiving services at the Abbey to commemorate their silver, golden and diamond wedding anniversaries, but this milestone is not being marked with such a service.

The Duke has officially retired from public duties and is now 96, and making the most of his free time.

Steeped in more than 1,000 years of history, Benedictine monks first came to the site in the middle of the 10th century.

The present church, begun by Henry III in 1245, is one of the most important Gothic buildings in the country, with the medieval shrine of Anglo-Saxon saint Edward the Confessor still at its heart.

Its official title is the Collegiate Church of St Peter, Westminster, and it has been the coronation church since 1066. The Queen's was the 38th.

It is the final resting place of 17 monarchs, among them Charles II and Elizabeth I.

On the day of the royal wedding, eight bells rang out in celebration. There are currently 10 bells, located in the north west tower - two more were added in 1971.

A Westminster Abbey spokeswoman said: "A full peal demands considerable concentration by the ringers, all of whom commit the progress of the 5,000 changes to memory."

## Former British Army legal chief to be Rector of the Falkland Islands

The southern-most cathedral in the Anglican Communion, Christ Church Cathedral at Stanley in the Falkland Islands, is to get a new rector. And the priest chosen to head up the Anglican Church on the islands is the Revd Nicholas Mercer, who – as Lt Col Nicholas Mercer – was the chief legal officer for the British Army during the 2003 Iraq war. Mercer left the army in 2011 to pursue a long-standing call to the ordained ministry. He was ordained to the diaconate in Salisbury Cathedral that year served a curacy at St Mary the Virgin in the Dorset parish of Gillingham, where he was ordained to the priesthood. For the past three years he has served as assistant chaplain at the prestigious Sherborne School in Dorset.

Mercer is an outspoken critic of the use of torture and in 2011 he was named Human Rights Lawyer of the Year for his work which saw the British Government concede that the UK's Human Rights Act applied as much to prisoners of war detained on the battlefield as it did in the domestic situation; bringing an end to the use of hooding, stress positions, food and sleep



## **The Revd Nicholas Mercer is to be the new Rector of the Falkland Islands**

deprivation and white noise as a precursor to interrogation.

Despite the praise heaped on his work in many quarters, he had been suspended by the Ministry of Defence over his challenges. “There was a sense that, after ‘baptism’ – being born again – I was sent into the wilderness as Jesus was, because it was a time of great trial,” he said in 2011. “In some respects, it was like being Jonah in the belly of the whale, whom God wanted and wouldn’t let escape! It’s a mixture of being ‘sorrowful yet always rejoicing’.

“The role of combative lawyer and priest are not necessarily opposed and my stance over the rights of prisoners was as much a theological battle as one about human rights. In my view, the Christian teaching that all human beings are created in the image of God is the basis for all human rights.”

The Parish of the Falkland Islands is an independent autonomous parish, outside any Anglican province. Its status within the Anglican Communion is “extra provincial to the Archbishop of Canterbury.”

The church’s status as a cathedral stems from the Victorian era, and the consecration of Waite Hockin Stirling to serve as Bishop of the new Diocese of the Falkland Islands, which covered much of south America. In 1910, as the churches grew, a series of new dioceses were carved out leaving the Falkland Islands effectively isolated as an English speaking British colony in a province which was very-much dominated by Spanish-speaking Latin America.

In 1978, responsibility for the Falkland Islands passed to the Archbishop of Canterbury, who appoints a commissary as Bishop for the Falkland Islands. In recent years that has been a post held by the Bishop at Lambeth – currently

Bishop Tim Thornton. Despite the changes, the status of the Christ Church has remain unchanged: it is a cathedral without a diocese, serving a parish which reports to the Archbishop of Canterbury. Christ Church Cathedral in Stanley lies almost 8,000 miles south-west of Canterbury Cathedral.

Spencer has already spent time on the Falkland Islands, completing a parish placement in Stanley during training for the ordained ministry. "I loved my placement and was very warmly welcomed by the parish," he said in a post on the parish's Facebook page. "I am delighted to be returning as the Rector seven years later."

The Revd Nicholas Spencer will take up his new role early in the New Year.

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