

## Archdeacon Stephen Forde appointed Dean of Belfast



**The Ven Stephen Forde, rector of Larne and Inver with Glynn and Raloo and Archdeacon of Dalriada, has been appointed Dean of Belfast.**

The appointment was announced by the Board of Nomination of St Anne's Cathedral yesterday

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**NEWS October 30**

Sunday October 29. Archdeacon Forde succeeds the Very Rev John Mann who has moved to Salisbury Diocese.

Archdeacon Forde, 55, was born in Banbridge and grew up in Rathfriland, Crossgar and later Belfast. He was ordained a deacon in 1986 and a priest in 1987. He was educated at Campbell College, Belfast; the University of Edinburgh and the Church of Ireland Theological College.

He is married to Fiona, a Staff Nurse at Antrim Hospital, and the couple has two daughters Rachel and Amy, and a son, Michael.

Archdeacon Forde was curate assistant at St Mary's Parish, Crumlin Road, Belfast, Diocese of Connor, from 1986-1989 and was Chaplain at Queen's University, Belfast, from 1989 until 1995 when he moved to Dublin Diocese as incumbent of the Grouped Parishes of Booterstown and Mount Merrion.

In 1999 he returned to the Diocese of Connor as rector of the Parishes of Larne and Inver with Glynn and Raloo.

In Larne, Archdeacon Forde saw through the completion of three major building projects, with the total restoration and refurbishment of Glynn Parish Church (1999-2000), and Raloo Parish

Church (2005), and a significant extension to Glynn Church in 2012.

The medieval church of St Cedma's, Larne, which dates to 1350, was sensitively adapted to meet disabled access requirements, and the church roofs and tower were repaired earlier this year. Since 2011 Archdeacon Forde has led a major project to build a new parish hall complex at St Cedma's.

Archdeacon Forde, whose primary degree is in Architecture, has been a member of the Connor Diocesan Architecture and Buildings Committee since 1999. In his ministry he has been chair of Connor Council for Mission, a member of the diocesan Training Council, a Rural Dean, a member of the Church's Advisory Committee on Training and Ministry and he served as Domestic Chaplain to the Bishop of Connor from 1991-1995. He was a Minor Canon of St Anne's Cathedral from 1989 to 1991.

He has led Connor Candidate Priests' Retreat and similar retreats in the dioceses of Connor and Down and Dromore and is a current member of Connor Synod Planning Group.

Outside of ministry, Archdeacon Forde was chair of Larne High School Board of Management from 2004 to 2007. He is a former Campbell

College chorister and a former member of the University of Edinburgh's St Cecilia Singers. The Dean-Elect's interests include music, hill walking, cycling, photography, travel and reading.

Archdeacon Forde said his appointment was 'a huge challenge' and one he is 'incredibly excited about taking on.' "I am conscious that this is a time of significant change for the Cathedral," he said. "For many years it was at the edge of city life and now it is at the very centre of the thriving Cathedral Quarter.

"My vision is to see the Cathedral as a spiritual centre at the heart of the city, a Cathedral with doors to pass through, not to pass by. It is a Cathedral open to all, for those who are seeking God and faith in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Building on the legacy of those who have gone before, the Cathedral will continue to offer prayer, praise and service."

The Dean-Elect said the Cathedral needed to be a place of ecumenical endeavour, reaching out to all, and to become a meeting point in a city that has become increasingly multi-ethnic and multi-faith.

"I would love to see the Cathedral as a place of social justice and social outreach, building on the tradition of Black Santa where the generosity

of people is used to support charities in Northern Ireland and overseas. It is exciting to see how that can be taken forward in relation to the needs of the city,” Archdeacon Forde said.

He said he did not expect to be in post as Dean before Christmas but the Black Santa tradition will continue uninterrupted. “I will be a Black Santa in training, and hope to be present at the launch of the 41<sup>st</sup> Sit-out for charities in December along with colleagues from the Cathedral clergy and Chapter,” Archdeacon Forde said.

He is also committed to building on the ‘musical excellence’ that has been established in St Anne’s in recent years, and to the Cathedral’s work in schools in north Belfast. “I want to continue to give opportunities to people across the city to develop self-confidence and self-esteem,” he said.

“I would also like to explore how the Cathedral can give a lead in being a place where we take our ecological commitments seriously.”

The Bishop of Connor, the Rt Rev Alan Abernethy, Chairman of the Board of Belfast Cathedral, said: “I am delighted to welcome the appointment of Archdeacon Stephen Forde as the next Dean of Belfast. He has been a very

able archdeacon, a faithful, hard-working rector, a trusted colleague and an encouraging friend. He brings a breadth of experience, a humble spirit and a joyful faith to his new role.

“I know the Cathedral will welcome him and be blessed by his ministry and leadership.”

No date has been set for the installation of the new Dean of Belfast.

## **Archbishop Welby to present Anglican Reformation resolution to Catholic and Lutheran leaders**

A resolution from the Anglican Consultative Council welcoming an agreed Roman Catholic-Lutheran declaration on justification will feature at a service in Westminster Abbey tomorrow evening. The service, on Tuesday (31 October) will mark the 500th anniversary of Martin Luther nailing his 95 theses, critical of Catholic teaching on justification, to the door of All Saints' Church – the Schlosskirche – in Wittenberg, Germany.

Luther's actions kick-started the Reformation, and led to bloody and violent actions and counter-actions between Roman Catholics and Christians in the newer Lutheran and other

Protestant churches which emerged as the Catholic monopoly in Europe came to an end..

After extensive ecumenical dialogue between the Pontifical council for Promoting Christian Unity and the Lutheran World Federation, a [Joint Declaration on the Doctrine of Justification](#) was agreed in 1999. In it, the two Churches sat that they now share “a common understanding of our justification by God’s grace through faith in Christ.” The agreement paved the way for a closer relationship between Catholics and Lutherans, culminating in Pope Francis’ participation in [a service in Malmö, Sweden, last year](#) at the start of a year of activities to mark the 500th anniversary of the Reformation.

The pivotal Joint Declaration was adopted by the World Methodist Council in July 2006 and by the World Communion of Reformed Churches in July this year.

In April 2016, the Anglican Consultative Council, at their meeting in Lusaka, Zambia, “welcomed and affirmed” the substance of the Joint Declaration. [In a resolution](#), the ACC said that it “recognises that Anglicans and Lutherans share a common understanding of God’s justifying grace . . . that we are accounted righteous and are made righteous before God only by grace



**Westminster Abbey in London will host a service tomorrow to mark the 500th anniversary of the Reformation.**

through faith because of the merits of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, and not on account of our works or merits.”

The resolution went on to recognise “that in 1986 the Anglican-Roman Catholic International Commission (ARCIC) produced a statement Salvation and the Church, which observed that our two Communion are agreed on the essential aspects of the doctrine of salvation and on the Church’s role within it.”



In February, the Church of England's General Synod noted the ACC resolution when it approved a motion welcoming "signs of convergence between the churches on the doctrine of salvation." The Synod commented initiatives taking place to mark the anniversary "to foster mutual understanding and reconciliation between churches, for the sake of our deeper renewal in the grace of God and our ability to share the gospel of salvation with all the world."

At tomorrow's Westminster Abbey service, the Archbishop of Canterbury will present copies of the ACC resolution to the Roman Catholic Church and the Lutheran World Federation.

"The Joint Declaration was a historic breakthrough in overcoming the divisions that emerged from the Reformation through a fresh statement of its key concern, how sinners can be put right with God and empowered to live in a new way," the Bishop of Coventry, Dr Christopher Cocksworth, said. "The good news of forgiveness and freedom through Jesus Christ is what unites us as Christians. It's the word of grace and hope that – together – we want to share with all the world."

The Anglican Communion's director of unity, faith and order, Canon Dr John Gibaut, said: "In our separate bilateral dialogues with both the Catholic Church and the communion of churches in the Lutheran World Federation, Anglicans have explored the questions of justification, and are agreed on the essential aspects of our salvation in Christ.

"During the historic 2017 anniversary, Anglicans rejoice in the extraordinary achievement that the Joint Declaration on the Doctrine of Justification represents as a sign of healing after 500 years of division."

Archbishop Justin will preach the sermon at tomorrow's service, which will be led by the Dean of Westminster, Dr John Hall. It has been organised with the Council of Lutheran Churches in the UK. A new anthem, commissioned for the occasion from Danish composer Bent Sørensen, will be performed by the Westminster Abbey Special Service Choir.

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## **Stunning craft piece brings Christian communities in Tralee closer together**

The Denny family once held such power in Tralee that their hand can still be felt in much of the town's infrastructure and they are once more making an important addition to public life in Tralee - through the stunning craftwork of one of their direct descendants, the Kerryman reports.

This time, the hand of the famous Denny dynasty is working towards the reconciliation of the town's Catholic and Church of Ireland communities.

Tom Denny unveiled his remarkable Reconciliation Window at St John's Roman Catholic Church during a ceremony on Friday night performed by Catholic Bishop of Kerry Ray Browne and Church of Ireland Bishop of Limerick and Killaloe Dr Kenneth Kearon.

It's the latest work from an artist who has carried out over 60 major commissions on some of the most treasured Anglican cathedrals, including Durham and Leicester.

The curious have been popping into the Church in recent days as Tom neared completion of the

intricate installation project and the vast majority were deeply taken with the artistry of the piece, a triptych depicting St John the Baptist in the wilderness, Christ reading from the Book of Isaiah and, as its central image, the loving father embracing the Prodigal Son.

It is the first stained glass to be installed in St John's in 60 years and takes its place in exalted company, including Sean Keating's masterful Stations of the Cross; Michael O'Connor's Great Sanctuary Window (from 1861) as well as other stained glass works by Earley Brother, Richard King and Patrick Pollen.

Friday night's unveiling and blessing marked the culmination of a plan long in the offing.

"The project has been more than five years in planning and was conceived as a Tralee 800 project for the town's Octocentenary celebrations and Year of Mercy in 2016," St John's Parish Priest Fr Tadhg Fitzgerald said.

Five metres high by three metres across, it soars above the pews on the righthand side of the nave - seen immediately on entering the church. The window contains over 30 individual figures and, in a great nod from Tom Denny to the town, includes scenes from Tralee's history, its bay area and the Slieve Mish mountains.

## **Bolton Library exhibition to return to Cashel**

Tour Guides in the Rock of Cashel should be trained to showcase a proposed exhibition of part of the GPA Bolton Library collection, which could return to Cashel as soon as next year, heard this month's Municipal District Meeting, The Tipperary Star reports.

Cllr Roger Kennedy said he had spoken to the head of University of Limerick's Library, and there has been a lot of work done regarding the Church of Ireland GPA Bolton Cashel Library collection that was transferred there.

Cllr Kennedy put forward a motion urging that the members be updated on the progress of negotiations with the OPW to expedite the opening of the Bolton Library exhibition in Cashel.

It's understood some of the collection now undergoing repair work, could be transferred back to Cashel for display in an exhibition in the former tax offices in Friar Street. Cllr Tom Wood said he understood the OPW has set aside €90,000 for that purpose.

The Rock of Cashel authorities will be

## **C of I minister uplifted at response to desecration of church in Galway**

A Church of Ireland minister has been “bowled over” by the community support following the ransacking of his isolated church in Co Galway. Vandals targeted Holy Trinity Church near Clifden, in a remote part of Connemara, in recent days causing up to €70,000 worth of damage.

Canon Stan Evans said he was convinced there was no sectarian motive for the vandalism he described as “wanton damage,” and that the local community had been incredibly supportive. “I have never, ever, experienced such an outpouring of love and support for us,” he said.

“Here in Clifden we enjoy the most wonderful ecumenical relationship with our neighbours and we are as one in everything that we do. This is so contrary to the love that is shown by all and sundry – this is just a one off. “It’s terrible damage, and we are devastated by it, but most important thing is that no one was hurt, no one has lost their life.”

As well as splitting the pulpit in two, the vandals

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