

Down and Connor Clerical Appointments

11th August 2019

In response to the pastoral needs of the people of the Diocese of Down and Connor, Bishop Noel Treanor has made the following appointments which take effect on **Friday 23rd August 2019**:

Very Rev Paul Armstrong, to retire and to assist in partial ministry as **Pastor Emeritus in St Mary's Chapel Lane**

Very Rev Liam Blaney SPS, to retire and **available for cover and supply**

Very Rev Raymond Fulton, to retire and assist in partial ministry as **Pastor Emeritus in Ballycastle**

Very Rev Aidan Kerr, to retire and assist in partial ministry as **Pastor Emeritus in St Mary's on the Hill, Glengormley**

Very Rev Patrick McKenna, to retire and assist as **Pastor Emeritus in Ballymena**

Very Rev Sean Rogan *Pastor Emeritus*, to assist in partial ministry as **Priest in Residence in Carryduff**

Very Rev Timothy Bartlett, to be **Adm. St Mary's Chapel Lane and Episcopal Vicar for Diocesan Forward Planning**

Very Rev Darren Brennan, to be **PP Dunloy**

Very Rev Ciaran Dallat, to be **PP Loughinisland**, in addition to Prison chaplaincy

Very Rev Brendan Hickland, to be **PP Holy Rosary and PP St Bernadette's**

Very Rev Gabriel Lyons, to be **PP St Teresa's**

Very Rev Brian McCann, to be **Adm. Derriaghy**, in addition to **PP St Luke's**.

Very Rev Damian McCaughan, to be **PP Ballymoney**

Very Rev Conor McGrath, to be **PP Glenravel and Adm. The Braid** and to provide **chaplaincy services to schools in Ballymena and St Killian's College, Carnlough**

Very Rev Luke McWilliams, to be **PP Rasharkin**

Very Rev Francis O'Brien, to be **PP Larne**

Very Rev Kieran Whiteford, to be **PP Cushendall and PP Cushendun**

Very Rev Michael Spence, to be **CC St Bernadette's** and will continue to provide **chaplaincy services in St Malachy's College, Belfast**

Rev Dominic McGrattan, to be **Chaplain to Queen's University Belfast** and to assist as **Priest in Residence in St Brigid's**

Rev Brian Watters, to assist in **St Mary's Chapel Lane**, in addition to CC St Peter's Cathedral

Rev Włodzimierz Dwiduch S Chr., to be **Chaplain to the Polish Community residing in St Malachy's**

Rev Aloysius Lumala, to be **CC Ballymena**

Rev James Madden O Prem., to assist in **St Mary's Chapel Lane**, in addition to part-time Prison chaplaincy

On behalf of the Diocese of Down and Connor, I would like firstly to pay tribute to Fr Paul Armstrong, Fr Liam Blaney SPS, Fr Raymond Fulton, Fr Aidan Kerr and Fr Patrick McKenna, who have recently retired after many years of pastoral ministry and fruitful service within the diocese. With the faithful of the diocese I am grateful for their generosity in offering to assist within the local Pastoral Communities in which they will now reside.

Once again, I extend my heartfelt thanks to the Mill Hill Fathers who recently concluded their Mission within the historic city parish of St Mary's, Chapel Lane after 37 years. My sincere thanks also to Fr Gerard Magee OCSO who, while ministering for the last two years as Chaplain to Queen's University Belfast, decided to return to his community at Our Lady of Bethlehem Abbey in Portglenone. I express thanks to Fr Krzysztof Sanda S Chr. who, since August 2013, has ministered to and served the Polish community within the diocese.

Last Sunday 4th August, Pope Francis drew attention to the significant pastoral challenges faced by clergy in his Letter to Priests, marking the 160th Anniversary of the death of Saint Jean Vianney, affirming: "Despite the hardships of the journey, you are writing the finest pages of the priestly life." I similarly acknowledge the untiring service and dedication of all who minister within the diocese.

Undoubtedly, the increasing age profile of clergy and declining numbers of available priests has created its own challenge in fulfilling the Church's mission and ministry, a challenge which our clergy respond to on a daily basis with generosity and faith-filled dedication. I take this opportunity to renew an appeal to pray for more vocations to the diocesan priesthood, to religious life and to the permanent diaconate so that others may join with them as 'labourers in the harvest'.

In the same thoughtful and inspiring Letter, Pope Francis also thanked the faithful People of God, who offer support and encouragement to clergy through their friendship, concrete support and heroic witness of faith. He says, "The prayer of a pastor is nourished and made incarnate in the heart of God's People. It bears the marks of the sufferings and joys of his people, whom he silently presents to the Lord to be anointed by the gift of the Holy Spirit." Together with the priests, the religious, the permanent deacons and all those women and men who exercise a variety of ministries and services in our local church, I am grateful to all those whom we are called to serve in the diocese for their ongoing understanding and support. I assure all parishioners of my commitment to meet the sacramental and pastoral needs of the diocese, notwithstanding that this, at times, involves the establishment of new structures of administration and the reconfiguration of pastoral and sacramental services and ministries within our Pastoral Communities.

Finally, I wish to record my thanks to all the priests who are affected by the above appointments. I thank them for their co-operation, understanding, friendship and loyalty, and I wish them God's blessing, good health and fulfilment in their respective ministries.

+Noel Treanor

Bishop of Down and Connor