



## Year of prayer launched on Titanic slipway

**Down & Dromore Diocese will launch its Year of 24/7 Prayer with a New Year's Eve celebration in Belfast's Titanic Quarter.**

The iconic slipway will be the setting for the start of an unbroken chain of prayer that will thread throughout the diocese during 2014 and lay the foundations for a Year of Mission in 2015.

Each 24 hours is divided into slots so that night and day throughout the year, at least one person will be interceding in a prayer room in the diocese.

All of the parishes will take part, each praying continuously for between 3 and 7 days. The 'prayer scroll' will then be passed on to the next location.

The prayer rooms will be creatively set up with a number of 'stations' which people may use as to help them as they pray for their church, the diocese and beyond.



Between 1 January and 6 March the prayer scroll will travel between 17 parishes in the area from Titanic to Helen's Bay.

Details of the event -

<http://www.downanddromore.org/news/2013/12/Year-of-247-Prayer-to-launch-from-Titanic-slipway#.Uqx5GZFG5s4>

## **Belfast civic service remembers Mandela**

**A special service to remember the life of Nelson Mandela has been held in St Anne's Cathedral, Belfast.**

The service was open to the public, and other participants included representatives of the Roman Catholic, Methodist and Presbyterian churches, as well as the Hindu and Bahá'í faiths. It was jointly organised by Mr Ó Muilleoir, Dean John Mann, the Chapter of St Anne's Cathedral and the African and Caribbean Support Organisation NI (ACSONI)..

Before the service Mr Ó Muilleoir said: "This is an opportunity for the people of Belfast to reflect on the life of Nelson Mandela and give thanks for the inspiration and legacy he has left us."

Dean Mann added: "I welcomed this opportunity to share with the lord mayor and the African community in Belfast in a celebration of the life of Nelson Mandela.

"It is important that we mark the occasion of his death, but yet more important that we learn the lessons of his life."

The service, called Reflections on the Life of Nelson Mandela - Lessons in Peace and Reconciliation, was inspired by Mr Mandela's life with readings from Scripture and hymns and prayers, but also including a significant number of quotations from Mandela himself arranged within six focused sections of the service, which are: "On those who live in darkness and experience violence", "Freedom", "Forgiveness", "International Co-operation", "Unity and the victory over Apartheid" and finally, "Peace and Reconciliation".

Poet Nandi Jola read two of her works, and there also were contributions from the Manukahunney Singers, the Intsika Ka Xhosa South African dance group and Belfast's Filipino community, as well as local business leaders and members of Belfast City Council's Youth Forum.

## **Community church meets for first time**

**Yesterday St Brigid's Hall on the Lower Braniel Road became the home to Braniel Community Church which is the second of Down & Dromore diocese's church plants.**

Their first worship gathering took place there at 11.30 am after a traditional service at 10.00 am.

A small team has been working towards this day, getting the hall ready and getting to know the area and its people. Susan McFarland and Josh Lewis have been out in the community and school, calling door to door and prayer walking.

Braniel is a mission area created within the parish of Orangefield with the agreement of the rector.

Details of Plant for Him -

<http://www.downanddromore.org/pages/action/plant-forHim#.Uqx58Y3Z4it>

## **Families enjoy MU Christingle Service**

**A Christingle service organised by the Diocese of Connor Mothers' Union and the clergy of Antrim Parish was held in All Saints' Parish Centre on Sunday December 8.**

There was excellent support from young families, neighbouring Church of Ireland parishes and MU members who travelled from throughout the diocese.

The vicar of Antrim Parish, Archdeacon Stephen McBride has recently been



appointed chaplain to the Mothers' Union in Connor and this was the first official occasion in which he and the Diocesan President, Mrs Valerie Ash, worked together.

Christingle, meaning Christ Light, originated from the Moravian church in Germany and was first used in a service in Marienborn in 1747. The orange represents the world into which Christ was born and the red ribbon reminds us that his blood was shed for the whole world. The fruits and sweets on the four skewers represent God's gifts to us, the fruits of the earth and the four seasons. The lighted candle, pushed into the centre of the orange, represents Christ, the light of the world, and the tin foil wrapped around the candle reminds us that we are to reflect Christ's light in the world in all that we do and say.

The service was led by the Venerable Dr Stephen McBride and the Rev Adrian Halligan, All Saints' Pastoral Administrator. Valerie Ash, Diocesan President and Claire Thompson, a Mothers' Union member from Antrim Parish read the two passages of scripture.

The highlight of the service was the lighting of the Christingles. Thankfully, with an excellent risk assessment being carried out beforehand, no one was injured and not a single fire extinguisher was deployed!

Following the distribution of 'goodie bags' and some seasonal refreshments, mulled wine and mince pies, a most uplifting act of worship and a very enjoyable occasion came to a close.

## **Appointments**

**Ferns Diocese - The Bishop has also appointed the Revd Canon Patrick Harvey, the Diocesan Canon in St Patrick's Dublin, to also hold the Prebend of Clone/Crosspatrick.**

He has appointed the Dean of Ossory, the Very Revd Katharine Poulton, to be Prebendary of Kilrush and Toombe.

This will fill the three vacant canonries in Ferns so that the Chapter is again complete.

The installation will take place in St Edan's Cathedral on Sunday 26th January 2014 at 4 p.m., the Sunday nearest St Edan's Day.

**Further canonries in Ossory & Leighlin. The Venerable Dr Paul Mooney, Dean of Ferns, has also been appointed Precentor of Ossory & Leighlin.**

The installation will take place in Kilkenny at choral evensong in the Cathedral on Candlemas, Sunday 2nd February, at 5 p.m.

## **Belfast's Black Santa starts sitout**

**The Dean of Belfast, the Very Revd John Mann, begins his third Black Santa Christmas sitout for charity at St Anne's Cathedral today, Monday 16 December.**

In the days leading up to Christmas Eve, the Very Revd John Mann will be joined on the cathedral steps by cathedral clergy, the Bishops of Connor and Down and Dromore, and members of the Cathedral Chapter.

As usual, most of the money collected will be distributed to local charities, with a portion going towards overseas work. This year there will be a separate collection to be donated to the Philippines Appeal.

Dean Mann said: "As we begin the Black Santa sitout again this year we are very conscious of needing to support local charities as we always do, but we are also very aware of the situation in the Philippines and elsewhere in the world.

"Money donated during the Christmas sitout will be divided in the way it usually is, with most going to small local charities and some going towards overseas development, but we will keep a separate collection for anyone who wishes to give specifically to the Philippines Appeal."

This will be the 37th Black Santa sitout, a tradition started in 1976 by Dean Sammy Crooks who, concerned at the emphasis being placed on necessary and costly building programmes at the cathedral, decided to stand on Donegall Street in front of the cathedral and beg for the poor and charitable causes.

The sitout takes place from 9.00 a.m. – 5.30 p.m. every day from December 16 until Christmas Eve with the exception of Sunday 22 December.

Reflecting on his annual challenge, Dean Mann said: "I have not risked checking the weather forecast, I just hope it doesn't rain. But whatever the

weather, I look forward to meeting lots of people on the steps of the cathedral in the coming days.”

## **Dublin and Cork charity support**

**On Wednesday at 2pm the Lord Mayor and the Archbishop of Dublin will launch the St Ann’s Clergy Annual Sit-out for Charity which will continue daily from 11am to 6pm until Christmas Eve.**

The annual Ecumenical Carol Singing on the steps of the Mansion House, organised by the Dublin and Glendalough Diocesan Council for Mission and the Archdiocese Office for Evangelisation & Ecumenism, took place on Saturday. The event supports the Lord Mayor’s Charity.

This year the singing was led by “Teenspirit” which is a group from the Archdiocese. There were seasonal readings by The Lord Mayor, Miriam O’Callaghan (RTE), Gerard Brennan (Dublin Footballer) and Dr Anne Lodge (Principal of The Church of Ireland College of Education).

**The Bishops of Cork** took part in an Ecumenical Blessing of the SHARE Crib in Daunt Square, Cork, which marks the beginning of the annual charity collection for charity.

**Apologies for lay out. Software problems were encountered which hopefully should be dealt with by tomorrow.**

## **Prayer for Today**

Almighty and everlasting God, you are always more ready to hear than we to pray, and give more than either we desire or deserve. Pour down upon us the abundance of your mercy, forgiving us those things of which our conscience is afraid and giving us those good things which we are not worthy to ask save through the merits and mediation of Jesus Christ your Son our Lord; who is alive and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. Amen *Methodist Worship*