

Accordingly, a decision was made in Rome to appoint a man well known in Vatican circles.

Mons Fleming had been in the pontifical Irish College in Rome for the past 11 years, the last nine of those as rector.

Dr Fleming said on his appointment that he hoped to get on well with everybody.

"They feel up here that they have been overlooked and that Rome is not his

compliment to the parish, because Bishop Henry Murphy, known as "Doc Harry", also from Ardpatrick, was bishop during the era of great change during and after the Vatican Council of the 1960s and early 1970s.

"He was for many people the welcoming and very competent face of the Irish Church in Rome," said Bishop Murray.

"He officiated at the

Medieval Church, which was launched in the Hunt Museum earlier this year.

Mons Fleming: St Mary's Parish loss to be Kilaloe gain

Cathedral repairs to cost €8.4m

By MARTIN BYRNES

THE repair of the spire and roof of St John's Cathedral will cost the Diocese of Limerick €8.4m.

And as vocations fall off and clergy retire and die, Bishop Donal Murray has openly raised the possibility that there might not be enough priests to have even one per parish 10 years from now.

"Is it wise," he asks in his Lenten Pastoral Letter, "to try to maintain at least one priest in every parish, irrespective of size or should we be looking to some kind of co-operation and teamwork where a number of parishes would be clustered?"

And he asks how to ensure that, as numbers fall and age increases, impossible burdens are not placed on those still working.

Even if there should be a dramatic upturn, the position we will face 10 years from now is already quite clear," says Dr Murray.

And Dr Murray, referring to the cathedral, says:

Unless the entry of water into the cathedral is quickly stopped, the damage that has already been done to the structure will increase sharply."

The task of paying for this work will be a huge undertaking for the diocese. We have done the most through surveys, to determine exactly what needs to be done, and how best to do it, we are implementing stringent measures of cost control. In the coming months we will be planning how we



Dr. Donal Murray: when the cathedral is restored, it will still have the same dimensions and shape that its builders gave it (LL)

can try to gather this uncomfortably large amount of money."

"But," says Bishop Murray, "the size of the challenge daunting though it is, is as nothing to the achievements of the people of the diocese in the second half of the 19th century when, soon after the Famine, they built the magnificent cathedral which we have inherited from them."

The spire of the cathedral was not finished for a quarter of a century after the body of the church had been completed, and it was built fully 50 feet higher than the original plans had envisaged, and is by far the tallest spire in the country.

Bishop Murray continues his rebuilding metaphor in his pastoral by referring to "the living stones through which God will dwell in us and in our world" and speaks of the twin task of ensuring the future of the cathedral and the task of passing on a vibrant faith to the generations that follow us.

Referring to the visit of Pope John Paul II to Limerick nearly a quarter of a century ago, he quoted the Pontiff as saying: "Lay people today are called to a strong Christian commitment to permeate society with the joy of the Gospel; for Ireland is at a point of decision in her history."

"When the cathedral is restored, it will still have the same dimensions and shape that its builders gave it. When the diocese is renewed to meet the future, it will look very different; the steep fall in vocations to the priesthood and religious life make that inevitable," says the bishop.

We should not be fatalistic about the fall in vocations. The encouragement of vocations has to be a priority for every member of the Church.

Take a Break
with....

LIMERICK
TRAVEL

AUSTRALIA

Fares from €883
ex Sinn/Cork/Dublin
Holiday V13 Service
Specials on Internal Flights
Stopovers from €28 pp/nt
LOW COST INSURANCE
www.limericktravel.ie

TRAVEL AGENT OF THE YEAR
Limerick Travel

BEDFORD ROW LIMERICK
TEL: 061 204444 FAX: 204455
www.limericktravel.ie

WINE COURSES
in

Limerick

Comprising wine
tasting, food and
wine pairings

For more information
call 061 388600
www.wineboard.ie

WINE DEVELOPMENT
BOARD OF IRELAND
www.wineboard.com

AARRA
...probably the
SALE
€6

CHRISTEEN
3 SEATER

was €12

now

€699

CHRISTEEN
2 SEATER

WAS €949

NOW €599!

FORTE 3 SE

* WHILE STOCKS LAST.

OPEN 7 DAYS
RIVERSIDE BUS. PARK,
FONTHILL RETAIL PARK, LIFFEY VALLEY, DUBLIN
DOUGHCLOVNE IND. EST., SARSFIELD RD., WILTON,
CLONMEL BYPASS (052) 82700
NEWBRIDGE RETAIL PARK (045) 43100
visit us on the web