

SATURDAY JUNE 15, 2002

GENERAL 1



At St John's Cathedral for the launch of the cathedral's fundraising effort, Fr Denis Mullane, administrator, with Tony Sadlier, project manager-finance; Dr Donal Murray, Bishop of Limerick, and Michael Field, chairman, fundraising committee (LL)

Bishop in plea to raise €8.4m for cathedral repair work

By JESSICA QUINN

PAST generations of Limerick people who helped make the building of St John's Cathedral possible were remembered this week as the Bishop of Limerick, Dr Donal Murray, launched a major fundraising drive for the cathedral's conservation project.

And Mayor Sadlier said at the launch that the cathedral was a great testament to generations who have gone before.

"There is a moral imperative on those of us who have inherited this wonderful building to fully and totally support this initiative," he said.

The appeal for funds was made as Bishop Mur-

ray launched a new brochure outlining plans for the cathedral which will be delivered to homes, businesses and associations throughout the Diocese of Limerick.

Bishop Murray described the cathedral as "a symbol of the faith and commitment of earlier generations. It is a landmark and a symbol of our city."

St John's Cathedral is currently undergoing major restoration at a cost of €8.4m. Throughout the restoration, the cathedral has been available for normal services every weekend. And this week, the cathedral will once again be open every day.

The cathedral conservation project started last autumn with the replacement of the copper roof at a cost of €2.1m, as well as the repairing of structural damage caused by rain leaking through the roof

over the years.

In order to complete the second phase of the project, which involves repairs to the tower, spire, masonry and grounds, donations are urgently required.

A third of the money needed is hoped to be raised through individual and corporate donations, a third through the parishes, and another third through the selling of diocesan assets.

Grant aid has also been requested. Submissions have been made to Limerick City Council, Limerick County Council, the Heritage Council and the Urban Village Renewal Programme.

These submissions have succeeded in securing €300,000 in grant aid for the project.

People can contribute to the fund through their local parish, through a once of donation or by set-

ting up a direct debit from their bank account.

"A concerted effort is now being made to raise awareness of the project and to encourage donations from individuals and corporate entities, which can be in the form of weekly, monthly, or once off donations made directly or through special parish collections throughout the Diocese," said Bishop Murray.

"We are also interested in hearing from anyone who would be prepared to host a special event or provide some other form of sponsorship, which would bring much needed funds to the project," he said.

A special bank account has been set up for the St John's Cathedral Restoration project at the Bank of Ireland, 94, O'Connell Street.

The account number is 38877529 and the bank sorting code is 90-4347.

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