



# Annual Finance Report

2014

## My Dear Priests and People,

I would like to present to you a Summary of Diocesan Finances for the year ending December 31st 2014.

Once again, let me thank you most sincerely for your generous support of the work of the Church in this diocese during the past year. Your priests and I are greatly heartened by your generosity and by the support for our work which this indicates. In difficult times for everyone, your support gives us the courage that we need in our ministry as well as the financial resources necessary for our work.

Each year in the Annual Report I comment on various aspects of the cost of the administration of this diocese. This year I would like to comment on the work of restoration which is taking place in St Muredach's Cathedral, as well as to refer to the progress we have made in fulfilling the obligations of the Charities Act 2009. I would

also like to tell you about the Diocesan Finance Review which took place in July 2014.

I am most grateful to you for your support. I am hopeful that, with your continued support and generosity, the diocese will be able to meet with the many pressing pastoral needs of this time.

With every best wish,  
Yours sincerely,

Bishop of Killala. October 8th 2015

## St Muredach's Cathedral. Parish Appeal.

St Muredach's Cathedral is the finest building in Ballina and an icon for the town. It is also the Cathedral church of this diocese. As such each parish has a special connection with it.

In twelve years' time, in 2027, the Cathedral will celebrate its bicentenary, when it will be two hundred years old. In 1827, long before the Great Famine, the walls were built, the roof put in place and the Cathedral was bare inside. Fourteen years later, the ornate ceiling which you can see today was put in place, some eight feet below the roof. During the past one hundred and seventy four years the rain has seeped through the limestone blocks which make up the walls of the Cathedral and it has rotted all the timbers supporting the ceiling. The result is that over a period of fifteen months we have to break through the ceiling, take out all the rotten timber, replace it with new wood and then remake the ceiling. As well as this we have to re-point the external limestone walls to make sure that they are properly sealed. When that work is completed we then have to re-paint the inside. The cost of this work is in the region of €3 million. It is work which has to be done. When it is completed, with God's help, we will have made our contribution to making sure that the Cathedral is still standing in Ballina in two hundred years' time.

Together with the Parish Finance Committee, the priests and I have broken down the cost into a number of parts. Ballina Parish has already contributed €500,000 towards the cost. The Parish Finance Committee has now decided to make an annual contribution of €150,000 over the next ten years. This will come from the weekly collection put in place some months ago. This will mean that the

parish will contribute €2 million to the overall cost. Diocesan funds have already paid €250,000 towards the cost of the renovation. Like the parish, we have pledged to make an annual contribution of €50,000 a year over the next ten years towards the costs. This will mean a contribution of €750,000 from the diocese. Together, the parish and the diocese will contribute €2,750,000 towards the estimated €3 million cost, over the next ten years.

We are now looking at other sources to complete this work. We are planning a postal campaign; when we will send a letter to each house in the Ballina area, inviting support for this work. We are also looking at the wide range of fundraising possibilities offered through the social media today. These will allow a worldwide audience to become aware of the work which is being done. Thirdly, some weeks ago, the Council of Priests discussed this fundraising campaign and they recommended that each parish would be given an opportunity to make a contribution to restoring the Cathedral Church of the diocese if they so wished. The Council suggested that I would visit each parish, explain what is involved in the work of restoration and give them an opportunity to support this work. They also suggested that an envelope collection would be taken up on the week-end following my visit to each parish and that this would then be forwarded as their parish contribution to the Cathedral.

I am confident that, with the great generosity of the people of this diocese, the work of restoration can be completed and paid for within the ten year period.

## Charities Act 2009.

The Diocese of Killala has finalised its preparation of our Diocesan and Parish accounts for the year ending December 31st 2014. These have now been consolidated and sent to the Charity Regulator. During the coming year the Register of Fixed Assets for each parish and for the diocese will be prepared and sent to the Regulator also, in

accordance with the legislation. I take this opportunity to thank each Parish Finance Committee and the Diocesan Finance Committee, together with the Implementation Team for their work. As bishop, I welcome this legislation. It will ensure greater accountability and transparency in every aspect of Church finances.

## 2014 Review of Diocesan Finances.

A thorough review of diocesan finances was undertaken during 2014.

restructuring of the way in which the priests are paid and the sick and