

**COMHAIRLE CATHRACH AGUS CONTAE PHORT LÁIRGE
WATERFORD CITY AND COUNTY COUNCIL**

**SPECIAL PLENARY MEETING CIVIC RECEPTION FOR DOMINICAN AND FRANCISCAN
ORDERS HELD ON 21ST FEBRUARY 2023 IN COUNCIL CHAMBER, WATERFORD.**

Present

Cllr. John O’Leary (Mayor)	Cllr. Cristiona Kiely
Cllr. Donal Barry	Cllr. Jason Murphy
Cllr. Joe Conway	Cllr. Pat Nugent
Cllr. Declan Clune	Cllr. Lola O’Sullivan
Cllr. Declan Doocey	Cllr. John Pratt
Cllr. Frank Quinlan.	Cllr. Eamon Quinlan
Cllr. Jim Griffin,	Cllr. Mary Roche
Cllr. Joe Kelly	Cllr. Seamus Ryan
Cllr. Damien Geoghegan	Cllr. Adam Wyse
Cllr. John Hearne	Cllr. Stephanie Keating
Cllr. Seamus O’Donnell	Cllr. Liam Brazil
Cllr. Seanie Power	

Apologies: Cllr. Ger Barron, Cllr. Tom Cronin, Cllr. Joanne Bailey, Cllr. Conor McGuinness, Cllr. Pat Fitzgerald, Cllr. Thomas Phelan, Cllr. Jody Power and Cllr. Mairead Tobin.

Officials in Attendance

Mr. M. Walsh, Chief Executive
 Mr. M. Quinn, Director of Services, Economic Development
 Mr. B. Power, Head of Finance
 Ms. H. Dunphy, Meeting Administrator
 Ms. A. Flynn, Corporate

1. Civic Reception to honour the Dominican and Franciscan Orders

The Mayor welcomed Bishop Alphonsus Cullinan, members of the Franciscan and Dominican orders and their guests to City Hall to celebrate the 800 years of service in Waterford from the Franciscan and Dominican orders and to thank them for all of those years as they leave. He said the Dominicans were founded by St Dominic in 1215 and were established to teach and to preach the Gospel and because of the black cloak they wore they were known as Blackfriars. They established their priory in Waterford in 1236, dedicated to Our Blessed Saviour and it became known as St Saviours. He said the Franciscans were founded by St. Francis of Assisi in 1209. Francis was inspired to lead a life of poverty, without money or possessions and because of the grey colour of the original habit the Franciscans were known as Greyfriars. Francis died in 1226 and just 14 years later in 1240, the Franciscans arrived in Waterford. For the next 300 years members of the Franciscan order worked in the inner-city living lives of extreme poverty and humility surviving on gifts of food from the people of the city. He said both of the orders have a vast and interesting history saying we are honoured that over 800 years of that history includes Waterford. He thanked both the Franciscan and Dominican Orders for their service in Waterford.

The Mayor called on Cllr. Murphy to formally propose the motion.

Cllr. Murphy said, as Metropolitan Mayor and as proposer of today's reception he would like to thank everyone for attending to celebrate the commendable 800-year service of the Waterford Franciscan and Dominican orders. He said in the 1690s there were five members of the Dominican Order in the city and Father John Coghlan was Prior and throughout the 18th century they maintained a presence in Waterford. He said in 1784 Father Anthony Duan obtained a lease of a house and premises in Thomas Street and he said the formal re-establishment of the Order took place in 1867 and in 1872 Father Mullins was appointed Prior and he obtained the site of the present-day St Saviours Church on O'Connell Street / Bridge Street which was completed in 1878. He said the Franciscan Friary was formally closed by King Henry VIII in 1540 and an alms-house known as the Hospital of the Holy Ghost was established there. He said even though the friary was officially closed, Franciscans continued to operate in Waterford and in 1612 a residence for the friars was re-established in Waterford and they continued to work among the poor of the city. He thanked both of the orders for their service to Waterford and their contribution to the city's history.

Cllr. O'Sullivan seconded the motion welcoming everyone to City Hall. She thanked the members of the Franciscan and Dominican orders for over 800 years of service in Waterford. She said the Dominican Priory was also suppressed in 1540 by King Henry VIII but in spite of the closure of the priory at Blackfriars the Dominicans continued to work in Waterford. She said in St. Saviour's Church on O'Connell/Bridge Street there is a small medieval statue of Our Lady with the Divine Child that is made of oak, about a foot high, and highly ornamented and is another piece of the Dominican's history in Waterford. She said Luke Wadding was one of the most famous Franciscans of all time. She said he was a distinguished scholar and theologian who wrote the history of the Franciscan order and established a number of Irish Colleges abroad including two in Rome. She said while he was responsible for creating the official list of saints of the Roman Catholic Church, he added St. Patrick to the list and also fixed St. Patrick's Day to the 17th of March, a day that is celebrated across the world. She thanked the Franciscan and Dominican orders for their service and also for their contribution to Waterford over the last 800 years.

The motion was proposed by Cllr. Murphy and seconded by Cllr. O'Sullivan and agreed by all.

Cllr. Pratt, Cllr. Barry, Cllr. Kiely, Cllr. Roche, Cllr. Griffin, Cllr. Geoghegan, Cllr. Kelly, Cllr. S. Power, Cllr. E. Quinlan, Cllr Ryan, Cllr. Nugent and Cllr. Conway all spoke in support of the motion. The Councillors said it was a privilege and an honour to attend the civic reception. They commended the work done and the hundreds of years of committed service to the people of Waterford. They said the Orders were held in great affection by the people of Waterford. The Councillors shared their stories and memories of the Dominican and Franciscan Orders. They thanked the Orders saying they will be sadly missed and wished them the very best for the future.

Fr. Joe Condren in his address said there was a sense of sadness but also a sense of the gift life has been for them. He said it is not often they hear from others what has been the gift of their way of life to this city and in particular to the families because ultimately it is at that level that people are touched. He said coming from today there is a treasure he will try to convey to the brothers of our Province and that is the fond memories and regard that have been conveyed to them. He thanked everyone for the honour bestowed on them and he said he was touched the way their lives could have been treasured and remarkable for the people of Waterford.

Fr. John Harris said there was mixed emotions today saying the first brothers came to Waterford in 1226. He said they were honoured to hear the stories shared and said the history of the Irish Dominicans would always include the history of Waterford. He said it was wonderful to be here today as followers of St. Francis and St. Dominic. He said they go back a long way together and there was

some support in the sadness in both the Dominican and Franciscan Orders leaving Waterford. He thanked the people of Waterford and the members as their elected representatives saying they could not have done what they did without their support and said for the brothers who lived here they received a lot more than they gave. On behalf of the Irish Dominicans he thanked the people of Waterford on this day of sadness but was so proud of what had been achieved together.

The motion was passed by the unanimous affirmation of the members present. The Mayor presented a scroll and a commemorative piece of Waterford Crystal to Fr. Joe Condren and Fr. John Harris.

Mayor invited, guests and the members to the Large Room for photographs and refreshments.

This concluded the business of the meeting.

Signed: _____
Mayor of Waterford City & County Council

Dated: _____