

Media Questionnaire: Priests

Your name, age and original home village, town or city (i.e. the place where you grew up):

Answer: Jordan McDermott, 26, from Darwen.

The church in Blackburn Diocese where you are serving:

Answer: Assistant Curate at Accrington St Andrew, St Mary Magdalen, St Peter and Church Kirk

Tell us about your family:

Answer: I am recently married to the wonderful Rebecca and we have a young Cockapoo puppy called Chester. We enjoy taking him for walks – and we let him think he is the head of the family!

If applicable, your former job before entering ministry?

Answer: I worked as a Choral Scholar at Blackburn Cathedral following my music degree and spent a year in London as a Pastoral Assistant before starting theological college.

What led you to take the steps towards ordination?

Answer: I have always been a church person, growing up in a church-going family. Whilst at university I explored a possible vocation to the priesthood more seriously with lots of guidance and support. There was no watershed moment for me – it just felt right, and I eventually stopped putting up barriers to God.

What's been the best thing about your training?

Answer: Living as part of a worshipping community. I guess that living in such a close-knit community as Mirfield is both the best, and most challenging aspect of training. I am pleased that this pattern of prayer and worship has continued in my Deacons year.

Can you say what is the most important thing you have learned during your training?

Answer: The value of a constant, and consistent prayer life. Whether you are up or down, spending time with God in prayer every day has kept me grounded and supported.

Reflecting on the difficult past year, please share a few thoughts about how the pandemic has impacted on ministry at this time (you could reflect how people have adapted to the circumstances in different ways as part of this response) ...

Answer: The pandemic has disrupted most aspects of our individual and shared lives. It has closed church buildings and made people think differently about how they live out their faith. For me, it has been a silver lining to see how members of the community locally, and nationally, have supported each other through such a difficult time and are now continuing to find a new way of living together. God is at the heart of that sharing with each other.

Meanwhile, what are some of your personal reflections on ministry in the post-pandemic period that lies ahead; the challenges and the opportunities?

Answer: No doubt, the pandemic will lead to changes in how we do mission and ministry in the Church of England. I pray that it will be an opportunity to bring the light of Christ into the lives of more people in the UK and the world than ever before.

Tell us something people don't know about you that might surprise them?

Answer: I am a Bolton Wanderers fan; such a revelation tends to surprise most people! If that didn't do it, then I am the Captain of the Blackburn Diocese cricket team – that still surprises me!

What do you view as your most significant personal achievement, before or during training?

Answer: I am a musician and before I sustained an injury I was a decent violinist. Touring different countries in Europe as the lead violinist of the International Youth Philharmonic Orchestra will always be a very fond memory for me.

How do you hope to continue to support the Diocesan Vision 2026 at a parish level?

Answer: Healthy Churches Transforming Communities. I hope to draw on my experience of the church being central to a shared, lived out faith and community. I believe that a healthy community and healthy relationships is key to making new disciples for Christ, especially in the parish context.

How would you express your own vision for the church?

Answer: The Good News of Jesus Christ is transformative. My vision for the church is that it remembers not to be too self-centred and self-preserving. In order for our church and communities to flourish they must be outward facing.

Finally, when you get the chance, how do you relax?

Answer: I enjoy walks, playing cricket and football and cooking. My Lancashire hotpot is worth trying if I do say so myself! Above all spending time with my beautiful wife, and wonderful dog. It is the little things that matter most.