

## **Media Questionnaire: Martin McDonald**

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

**Answer: Age 51. Wallasey, Cheshire.**

The church and location in Blackburn Diocese where you are serving:

**Answer: I am curate at St Cuthbert's Fulwood and the lead chaplain of Lancashire Teaching Hospitals NHS Trust (Preston and Chorley Hospitals).**

Tell us a bit about your family:

**Answer: Happily married to Tracey a physiotherapist. Two grown up children Daisy (21) and Thomas (19). Two cats, five chickens and two runner ducks!**

If applicable, what was your former job before entering ministry?

**Answer: I was a registered nurse for the 30 years prior to training for ministry working in emergency care (A&E) for the majority of my career.**

Tell us something about your journey towards ordination?

**Answer: My journey started way back when I was about 15 and felt a call to the priesthood. I spoke with a wise priest who suggested I 'get a bit of life experience first'. It's been a very long but beautiful journey.**

What has been a) the most important thing you have learned and b) the most inspiring thing you have experienced during your training? (They can be different!)

**Answer: The most important thing I have learned is that if your ministry is not rooted in prayer then it is pure folly and you won't sustain it in your own strength for very long. I continue to be inspired by the infectious enthusiasm for reaching the people of Lancashire with the gospel message coming from all corners of the diocese.**

As parishes continue to recover following the trauma of the pandemic, please give us some insight into how your parish is moving forward at this time (you could reflect how people have adapted and changed in the way they 'do church', including online, as part of this response).

**Answer: Whilst we adapted and moved online during the pandemic what I have seen is people are very hungry to meet in person, to have fellowship with each other, to share life together both in parish and in the hospital chaplaincy setting.**

What are some of the personal challenges and opportunities you face in your ministry in the coming year?

**Answer: Life is busy, so setting time aside for reflection and retreat is important. Ministry is wonderfully busy but ‘you can’t pour out from an empty cup’**

What do you view as your most significant personal achievement? (This may be connected to your ordination training of course or it could be something else from another aspect of your life.)

**Answer: Raising a happy, grounded family and celebrating a long and happy marriage.**

When he was announced recently as the next Bishop of Blackburn, Bishop Philip said: *“I am committed to continuing the growth of the church in Lancashire, helping to build joyful Christian communities. I would love to see the Church of England in Lancashire being an ever-stronger voice for justice, especially for the poorest. And I believe children and young people need to be at the very heart of all that we do.”*

How would you seek to support the Bishop in fulfilling these aims?

**Answer: I think the church has a significant role to play in speaking up for those who don’t have a voice. We have a huge platform to speak from and so it should be used to raise up those who are downtrodden.**

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

**Answer: I am a qualified paraglider pilot.**

Finally, when you get the chance, what do you do you chill out and relax?

**Answer: I am a keen cyclist both mountain biking and road cycling.**