

Text of the introductory address delivered by: DR HUGH BRADY, President University College Dublin, on 3 December 2008 in Dublin Castle, on the occasion of the conferring of the Degree of Doctor of Laws *honoris causa*, on DR DIARMUID MARTIN, ARCHBISHOP OF DUBLIN

A Sheansailéar, a mhuintir na hOllscoile agus a dhaoine uaisle,

Diarmuid Martin was born in Dublin on 8th April 1945. He attended Oblate School, Inchicore; De La Salle, Ballyfermot and Marian College, Ballsbridge. Proceeding to study for the priesthood after leaving school, he studied Philosophy at University College Dublin and Theology at Holy Cross College, Clonliffe.

He was ordained priest on 25th May 1969 and, after ordination, studied Moral Theology at the Pontifical University of St Thomas Aquinas – the Angelicum - in Rome. In 1973-74 he was Curate at the Parish of St Brigid in Cabinteely. In 1975 he was responsible for the pastoral care of Dublin pilgrims during the Holy Year in Rome.

He entered the service of the Holy See in 1976 in the Pontifical Council for the Family. In 1986 he was appointed Under-Secretary of the Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace, and in 1994 Secretary of the same Pontifical Council. On 5th December 1998 he was appointed Titular Bishop of Glendalough and was ordained Bishop by Pope John Paul II in St Peter's Basilica on 6th January 1999.

During his service at the Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace, Archbishop Martin represented the Holy See at the major United Nations Conferences on social questions in the 1990's. He also participated in activities of the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund, especially in the areas of international debt and poverty reduction.

In March 2001 he was elevated to the rank of Archbishop and undertook responsibilities as Permanent Observer of the Holy See at the United Nations in Geneva.

He was appointed Coadjutor Archbishop of Dublin on May 3rd 2003 and succeeded Cardinal Desmond Connell as Archbishop of Dublin on 26 April 2004.

Archbishop Martin serves currently as Chair of the Bishops' Conference Department of Social Issues and International Affairs and is also Chair of the Bishops' Commission on Europe. He is a member of the Commission on Ecumenism, the Bishops' Strategic Task Group for Education and a Trustee of Trócaire.

Since 2004 he has been a member of the Commission of the Bishop's Conference of the European Community (COMECE) and currently serves as Vice President and co-moderator of the Joint Working Group for Relations between the Roman Catholic Church and the World Council of Churches. In Dublin, with his encouragement, the Roman Catholic Church has become a full member of the Dublin Council of Churches, a gathering of Christian Churches in the capital first established in 1964.

At the recent synod of bishops in Rome he was elected to the Council of the General Secretariat of the Synod of Bishops which will prepare the next Synod. The Synod of Bishops was established by Pope Paul VI in September 1965 and defined by him at in September 1974 as:

"An ecclesiastic institution, which, on interrogating the signs of the times and as well as trying to provide a deeper interpretation of divine designs and the constitution of the Catholic Church, we set up after Vatican Council II in order to foster the unity and cooperation of bishops around the world with the Holy See. It

does this by means of a common study concerning the conditions of the Church and a joint solution on matters concerning Her mission.”

This gives us some sense of the honour - richly deserved - recently paid to our honouree of today by his brother Bishops.

Archbishop Diarmuid Martin is a man whose sense of mission has been deeply shaped and influenced by the Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World, *Gaudium et Spes*. This document, which did so much to define the Church of the Second Vatican Council and since, has informed his practical commitment to the social teaching of the church and the proclamation of same, whether that proclamation take place at a United Nations conference or in the act of preaching in the Pro-Cathedral.

It would be a mistake, moreover, to see his proclamation of the role of the Church in the Modern World as either haughty in any way or restricted to ecclesiastical confines. It has been the mark of the episcopate of Diarmuid Martin that he has affirmed the role of religion in the Irish public square in a way that has been both appropriately humble and appropriately assertive. He plays a leading role in the Irish Government's Structured Dialogue with Churches, Faith Communities and Non-Confessional Bodies.

It is to do no disservice to his distinguished apostolic predecessors to say further that he has done this in a novel, imaginative and multilateral fashion, making him the leader of a local church that engages fully with society at all levels – a true “Buon Pastore” for 21st century Dublin.

The honour which he receives today from the National University is entirely appropriate for one so dedicated to the idea and ideals of education. In delivering the NUI Convocation Centenary Annual Public Lecture at St Patrick’s College Maynooth in April of this year, Dr Martin condemned in prophetic fashion historical trends which have seen, and I quote “ideological, political or narrow religious interests attempt to use our educational system for their advantage.” In the same lecture, he spoke in positive terms of the joint statement made by myself and the Provost of Trinity on educational funding – but that is not why I am speaking in such glowing terms of him here today!

In a homily delivered on the occasion of the Milltown Institute Jubilee in January of this year, Archbishop Martin displayed his openness to and understanding of the world of the 21st Century when declaring:

“Dialogue between faith and culture must be a dimension of the Church’s activity in every generation because each generation generates a changed culture from that which went before it, and in our times cultural change is invariably rapid and radical.”

This global sensibility was reflected again as recently as November 14 last when, preaching on the feast of St Laurence O’Toole, he stated:

“The universalism of the Gospel is however not just about the Church spreading geographically and thus inevitably embracing people of different cultures and backgrounds. The newness of the salvation announced in Jesus, is that it is no longer based on the exclusive call of one people, but on a call in which no people should remain excluded.”

The prophetic dimension of Archbishop Martin’s ministry was captured very well in a homily delivered at Lourdes in May of this year when he declared:

"Lourdes is a place where accepted values are overturned. Lourdes is a place where sickness is looked on with respect. The sick and the handicapped are treated in Lourdes as our most treasured pilgrims"

And so it is highly fitting that we honour today the apostolic successor of Murray, Cullen, and Walsh – the latter, of course, our own founding NUI Chancellor. In so honouring him, we are honouring a man who is a truly global citizen, a prophetic voice of 21st century Christianity in Dublin, Ireland and across the globe.

Praehonorabilis Cancellarie, Totaque Universitas, Praesento vobis hunc meum filium, quem scio tam moribus, quam doctrina habilem et idoneum esse qui admittatur, honoris causa, ad gradum Doctoratus in Utroque Jure, tam Civili quam Canonico, idque tibi fide mea testor ac spondeo, totique Academiae.