

The Cathedral is full of dinosaurs

The Cathedral is full of dinosaurs – and no, that’s not a dig at my colleagues, I hasten to add!

No, this summer, we’re hosting the Natural History Museum’s Killer Question exhibition, which explores what the famous T Rex was really like and shows what he/she and a number of other of these ancient creatures possibly looked like.

What on earth has this to do with the Cathedral’s primary purposes of worship and mission you may ask. Is this just a money-making gimmick, and has the Cathedral lost its spiritual bearings?

Well let’s first of all be honest enough to say that we are hoping to make quite a lot of money from the exhibition and from the thousands of visitors who come to see it. And that will be quite an important element in helping to keep the doors of the Cathedral open 365 days a year, the roof on, its staff paid and its ministry resourced.

But it’s not just about the money. We believe this is a real missionary opportunity.

Many people never darken the door of a Church building, of any sort, from one year to the next. Even rites of passage like weddings, funerals, christenings are becoming increasingly secularized and coming to church is no longer the norm. Events and exhibitions like this however, bring a huge number of families and young people through our door and into our extraordinary and awesome space, which dinosaurs or not, unmistakably speaks of Christ at the centre of all that we are about. Visitors entering the West Door won’t see a dinosaur they will see the great cross that hangs at the head of the nave – and the figure of Jesus whose death and resurrection is at the heart of

our faith.

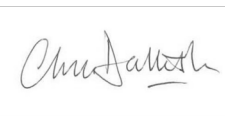
Our past experience, (we have hosted space capsules, moons and Gaia earth in recent years) tells us that coming to the Cathedral offers many people a chance (an excuse maybe) to connect to the faith we proclaim; to light a candle, say a prayer, have a conversation with a chaplain. It really can be a small step (perhaps the first) on the journey of faith.

And as for dinosaurs – well it also gives an opportunity to dispel some of the myths about science and religion, for example that the Church doesn’t “believe” in evolution. Perhaps it will help us make the connection with the really important issues about the extinction of species, which isn’t something that only happened millions of years ago. It’s happening now – and what are we planning to do about it and the big issues of bio-diversity and climate change?

Widening our imaginations, encouraging questions, attracting new people, engaging creatively with those who come, and also supporting our mission financially. We think that’s a win win!

Happy holidays to those who are having them

God bless you



Chris Dalliston
Dean of Peterborough



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Are you able to host a Ukrainian family?

Following a successful initial meeting in April, Peterborough Cathedral is working in partnership with Peterborough Citizens and Citizens UK to link local hosts with refugees from Ukraine, finding safe and stable places for those driven from their homes by the war.

Jurgita Bilinskiene has taken up the role of Ukraine Project Coordinator, heading up this vital work and aims to offer end-to end advice and practical help around the UK Government's Homes for Ukraine scheme.

Jurgita brings to this new role a

wealth of experience including being multilingual, having been an immigrant to this country herself and already being involved with the movement of Ukrainian refugees to Peterborough in an informal way. She is happy to have an informal chat about the opportunity or to visit your parish to talk about the project.

We have an increasing number of requests for hosts coming through as the situation in Ukraine becomes more uncertain and currently have 25 families waiting for homes in the Diocese. Are you able to help?

Get in touch by emailing ukraine@peterborough-cathedral.org.uk or visit www.peterborough-cathedral.org.uk/ukraine.aspx for more information.

