

## **St Andrew's Cathedral, Aberdeen - Diocesan Choral Festival**

### **Address given by Bishop Bob Gillies**

**13<sup>th</sup> May 2012**

My thanks indeed to all of you, participants and organisers, cathedral regulars and visitors, lay readers and colleagues – to say nothing of any others of you who don't fit any of these categories – for this wonderful annual occasion.

To those of you who make music enjoy the richness of what you do and the gift that God has placed at your disposal.

Music is a gift from God that must make its increasing mark upon the life of our church. If you've got a choir in your church invite your friends to join it.

The cathedral here has a fine, fine choir with one of its merits being that it doesn't practice during the week!

You turn up on Sunday (or for a special service) by a given time, you rehearse what is to be offered in worship, and then you offer it. Brilliant. And (apart from those who work into the wee small hours organizing everything into place) you don't have to commit to an extra evening in a busy life.

Let me commend that. Invite others to make music with you. Kincardine O'Neil does this with remarkable verve and nerve. One could think that if Kincardine O'Neil can do this then everyone can, but it would be much more appropriate to recognize the lead they are giving for everybody then to follow.

And if you haven't got a choir then the message has to be 'why not?' Go out and get one going.

And to those of you who are lay readers. You've come here to renew your vows.

When the clergy turn up for their equivalent event in Holy Week there's about 25 – 30 here for the event. You have a sanctuary full of choristers and a big congregation as well.

And so I say to you, from you to whom a lot is given, a lot is expected. I have no gift of music, but if I have a gift at all it is to encourage you to learn our church's lamented and long – forgotten skills of evangelism.

Simply sharing in the easiest and most careful of ways, the message that Jesus loves us and wants us to pass on his life of loving the world with him and by being before him, and with him, in worship.

I've heard wonderful ways of this having been done of late in Aboyne, in Yell and in Mastrick. And we're looking to expand mission and ministry in places like Inch and Woodhead as we have in Whiterashes recently Woodhead to say nothing of formalizing lay reader ministry more definitely than hitherto in Ballater, for example.

So whether you're a music maker, or a teller of the word, I say go out and get others in so that they in turn can go out in the name of Christ and for the salvation of his world.

Amen.