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**Statement from Most Reverend Alphonsus Cullinan  
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It was with great sadness that I learned about the decision of the Franciscan Order to leave the Friary in Lady Lane, Waterford. I can appreciate their huge difficulty in arriving at that painful decision. The contribution of the sons of St. Francis for almost 800 years since the mid-13<sup>th</sup> century is incalculable. The Friars are held in great esteem and affection by people all over the city, diocese and beyond. Thankfully, they are remaining among us in the Friary in Clonmel.

On behalf of all the people of the diocese of Waterford and Lismore I express our deep gratitude to God for all that the Franciscans have achieved through their prayer and service including their extraordinary care of the sick through hospital chaplaincy. No words could express the depth of that gratitude.

Let us pray for an increase in vocations to the Franciscan Order, especially here in Ireland. We are also immensely thankful that the Friars wish the Friary to remain a place of prayer and religious life and, by the Providence of God, a Religious Order have been looking for a place to start a Foundation in the diocese and they are immensely grateful for the generosity of the Friars in allowing them to take up residence in the Friary.

The Friars will continue to offer Mass in the Friary Church being serviced from the Friary in Clonmel.

As we give thanks for the blessings of the past we entrust the future to the providence of God knowing that as the Lord proclaims in St. John's Gospel "My Father goes on working and I go on working".