

## **THE RT REVD STEPHEN GEORGE PLATTEN**

### **Bishop of Wakefield since July 2003**

Stephen Platten was born on 17<sup>th</sup> May 1947 in Southgate just to the north of London. The son of George Henry Platten (advertising manager of a large textile company) and Marjory Platten. He was educated at the Stationers, Company's School, and thereafter at the Universities of London and Oxford. At the University of London (Trent Park College of Education and the University of London Institute of Education) he took a B.Ed. (II.i) in Education and Natural Science, and then at the University of Oxford (Cuddesdon Theological College and Trinity College, Oxford) he completed the Post-graduate Diploma in Theology (with Distinction) and then continued to research in new Testament and Christian Ethics. He was awarded a B.D. at Trinity College Oxford and also a D.Litt. (Hon) at the University of East Anglia both in 2003.

Stephen Platten was ordained deacon in 1975, and a priest in 1976, within the Diocese of Oxford. He was ordained to a curacy at St. Andrews, Headington, in the City of Oxford, where he remained for three years, before moving to Lincoln Theological College as Chaplain and Tutor in Ethics. During his time at Lincoln, alongside his responsibilities for the worship of the College and his teaching responsibilities, he also set up the College's first work in extra-mural and continuing education. He was at Lincoln from 1978-1982.

In 1983 he moved to the Diocese of Portsmouth to become a residentiary canon of the Cathedral and Diocesan Director of Ordinands, and therefore responsible for the selection and training of clergy within the diocese. Alongside this, his other responsibilities included being Canon Treasurer of the Cathedral and Chairman of the Finance Committee. Within the diocese he was responsible for post-ordination training and continuing ministerial education, lay adult education, and he was Director of the newly established deacons' training course, which was a pioneering initiative within that diocese. During his time at Portsmouth he was also one of the two co-founders of the Society for the Study of Christian Ethics, a learned society for those involved in any way in teaching and research in Christian ethics and moral theology. He remains a member of the teachers of Moral Theology, a Roman Catholic professional organisation in the same sphere. During his time in Portsmouth he was also a governor of and tutor within the Southern Dioceses Ministerial Training Scheme, a non-residential scheme for initial theological training for clergy.

In 1990 he moved to Lambeth Palace to become the Archbishop of Canterbury's Secretary for Ecumenical Affairs, serving first Archbishop Runcie and then Archbishop George Carey. Alongside this, he was also the Anglican Co-Secretary of the Anglican Roman Catholic International Commission, and the guest-master of the Nikean Club, an organisation which offers hospitality to church leaders visiting the Archbishop and the Church of England.

Whilst the Dean of Norwich between 1995 and 2003 Stephen was responsible for Norwich Cathedral and a member of the Bishop's Senior Staff in the Diocese of Norwich.

From 1991 to 1996 he completed two terms as the Minister Provincial of the Third Order of St. Francis in its European Province. From 1991 to 1997 he chaired the International Steering Committee for the *Pilgrims' Way* 1997 initiative which organised the pilgrimages from Rome through mainland Europe, Britain and Ireland to Derry to commemorate the 1400<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the arrival of St. Augustine in Kent and the fourteen hundredth anniversary of the death of St Columba on Iona. He has been a Governor of the Anglican Centre in Rome since 1990 and a member of the board of SCM Press Ltd since 1989. He has also been Chairman of SCM Press Trust since 1995 and is now a member of the Council of Hymns Ancient and Modern, the holding company for SCM Press and Canterbury Press, Norwich.

Stephen is married to Rossie, whose work is focused particularly on children with special needs. He has two sons – Aidan and Gregory – both of whom trained at Cuddesdon Theological College, were ordained deacons in 2003 and priests in 2004. His interests include reading, music, walking and Northumberland.

Stephen has written four books in his own name:

*Pilgrims*, Fount, London 1996  
*Augustine's Legacy*, Darton, Longman and Todd 1997  
*Pilgrim Guide to Norwich Cathedral*, Canterbury Press, Norwich 1998  
*Cathedrals and Abbeys of England*, Jarrold Publishing, Norwich 1999

He has written two books jointly:

*Deacons in the Ministry of the Church* (with Mary Tanner) Church House Publishing 1988  
*Spirit and Tradition: An Essay on Change* (with George Pattison), Canterbury Press, Norwich 1996

He has edited four books:

*Marriage*, Helen Oppenheimer, Mowbray, London 1990  
*Good for the Poor*, Michael Taylor, Mowbray, London 1990  
*Working with God*, Andrew Stokes, Mowbray, London 1992  
*The Ethics of I.V.F.*, Anthony Dyson, Mowbray, London 1995

He has edited and contributed to eight books:

*New Surroundings*, Darton, Longman and Todd 1997  
*Flagships of the Spirit*, Darton, Longman and Todd 1998  
*Seeing Ourselves: Who are the Interpreters of Contemporary Society*, Canterbury Press Norwich 1998  
*The Retreat of the State: Nourishing the Soul of Society*, Canterbury Press, Norwich 1999  
*Ink and Spirit: Literature and Spirituality*, Canterbury Press, Norwich 2000  
*Open Government*, Canterbury Press, Norwich 2000  
*Rundie On Reflection*, Canterbury Press 2002  
*Anglicanism and the Western Christian Tradition*, Canterbury Press 2003

Stephen has also written over forty articles for learned journals and reviewed over one hundred and twenty books in the past twenty-five years.