



A WELSHMAN DISCOVERS ARMENIA



Patrick Thomas, *From Carmarthen to Karabagh: A Welsh Discovery of Armenia*
(Gwasg Carreg Gwalch, £7.50) with forewords by the Archbishop of Canterbury and
the Armenian Primate of Britain and Ireland

Armenia is one of the world's most fascinating countries. At the crossroads between East and West its culture and spirituality have been enriched by a wide variety of influences, all of which it has made its own. Tragically Armenia has also been the battleground of rival empires over the centuries, culminating in the Genocide that began in Ottoman Turkey in 1915, during which a million and a half Armenians died.



Patrick Thomas visited the Republic of Armenia for the first time in 2005 and the experience made such a profound impact on him that he has returned there on four more occasions, travelling to different areas both of Armenia and Nagorno-Karabagh, and learning from the people whom he met there. He began to study the history and literature of the Armenian people, as well as their unique expression of Christian spirituality. As a Welsh-speaking Welshman he soon became intrigued by the parallels and the contrasts with Wales.

The result is a book that combines some of the insights into Armenian culture and history gained from the author's travels with reflections on them from a Welsh perspective. The prologue is a short history of Armenia, followed by chapters based on particular themes and symbols: Ararat (the sacred Armenian mountain, now in Turkey), Light, *Khatchkars* (the beautifully carved Armenian cross-stones), Doves, Words, Churches, Struggles and Genocide. It is dedicated to the Welsh Armenians and the Welsh friends of Armenia.

The launch of the book will take place in the Temple of Peace (main hall), Cathays Park, Cardiff, on 23rd April, 2012, 12.00-20.00 hrs. Light refreshments to follow.

THE AUTHOR

Patrick Thomas is Chancellor and Canon Librarian of St David's Cathedral in Pembrokeshire and Vicar of Christ Church, Carmarthen. He read English and Medieval Welsh at Cambridge and Theology at Leeds, and was awarded a doctorate by the University of Wales. He is author of several books on early Welsh spirituality. His most recent volume, *Brechfa and Beyond*, was a selection of his articles for *Cambria* magazine. An honorary member of the Gorsedd of Bards, he served for six years on the Welsh Language Board. He is also a regular religious broadcaster on Radio Wales, Radio Cymru and Radio 4.