

19th International Congress on Insurance (Mathematics and Economics)

June 2015

Members of the Scientific Committee, members of the Organising Committee, honoured guests, ladies and gentlemen: it's my privilege, as Dean of Liverpool, to welcome you to our Cathedral for your Gala Dinner on this the final evening of the International Congress on Insurance (Mathematics and Economics).

I am happy that you have brought your Congress to Liverpool this year, and I am absolutely delighted that you have brought this evening's celebration to our Cathedral. I hope this will be not just an enjoyable and memorable meal for you all, but an integral and productive part of your 19th gathering.

As you may know, this is the largest Cathedral in the UK, and the largest Anglican Cathedral anywhere in the world. And while it's true, of course, that size is not everything, we have more than our fair share of superlatives here. We boast the largest pipe organ in the UK, the sound of which you have just heard, and the highest and heaviest peal of bells on planet earth.

Now, some of you may be a little surprised to find yourselves sitting down to a banquet in what remains, after all, first and foremost a place of Christian worship and mission. But the Lord Jesus himself was notoriously criticised by his contemporaries for being 'a glutton and a drunkard', and as you can see we are not afraid to run some risks in that direction ourselves, in our efforts to offer hospitality in his name.

But of all the conference delegates we welcome, surely you are the ones who know most about risk. I see from your Conference programme that you have spent many hours this week considering Risk Theory, and Risk Measures. So I hope you will appreciate the mission statement that we have adopted here at Liverpool Cathedral. It is this: Liverpool Cathedral – a safe place to do risky things in the service of Christ. A safe place, to do risky things, in the service of Christ.

In other words, we see, in this place, following in the footsteps of Christ Jesus, to balance safety and risk-taking. I assume that balance is something you yourselves are also always seeking to achieve professionally: between safety on the one hand and risk-taking on the other. In sense, I feel I find myself among friends this evening, and so I am especially pleased to welcome you here for your dinner. Thank you.

The Very Revd Dr Pete Wilcox, Dean of Liverpool