

## **PRESS RELEASE**

### **ST JOHN'S CATHOLIC CATHEDRAL, PORTSMOUTH**

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**Date of release: 24 July 2007**

On 25 July 2007 Bishop Crispian Hollis, Catholic Bishop of Portsmouth, was awarded an Honorary Doctorate in Laws (*Honoris Causa*) by the University of Portsmouth for his contribution to the city, the Catholic Diocese of Portsmouth, ecumenism, the Church abroad.

## **STARTS**

### **Bishop Crispian knocks 'em for six!**

Crispian Hollis, Catholic Bishop of Portsmouth, well-known for his passion for cricket, was today awarded an Honorary Doctorate in Laws (*Honoris Causa*) by the University of Portsmouth in recognition of his far-reaching contribution.

In the oration prior to the award being bestowed, Roisin Gwyer, a member of the city's Catholic congregation and employee of the University, spoke eloquently of the contribution to life in the city, to the Catholic Diocese of Portsmouth, to ecumenism and the Church abroad attributable to the talents and positive effect which identify Bishop Crispian.

Having been educated by the Jesuits (Stonyhurst College) and subsequently at the Venerable English College (Rome), Crispian was ordained priest in Rome on the Feast of St Benedict on 11 July 1965.

Following conscription between 1954 and 1956, when as 2<sup>nd</sup> Lieutenant he saw service with the Somerset Light Infantry in Plymouth and Malaya, Crispian went up to Oxford (Balliol) to read history.

After his ordination, Crispian worked in Amesbury for one year before becoming Assistant Chaplain and subsequently Senior Chaplain to the Roman Catholic students in Oxford University. He then went to the BBC as Roman Catholic Assistant to the Head of Religious Broadcasting (1977-1981). He was then appointed Administrator (Parish Priest) to Clifton Cathedral. Crispian then rose to become Auxiliary Bishop in Birmingham, though living in Oxford, until 1989 when he was appointed Bishop to the Diocese of Portsmouth.

'I am deeply moved and highly honoured by this award from the University of Portsmouth,' commented Bishop Crispian. 'Education is at the heart of culture and I earnestly encourage everyone, young and old, to realise their educational potential. So it is that I pay special tribute to the University here in Portsmouth and to all other educationalists engaged in that pursuit'.

A tall, mild-mannered, elegant man of wit with a keen sense of humour, Bishop Crispian enjoys everything about his adopted home town of Portsmouth, especially the football. But cricket remains for ever his first love:

'I thank the University of Portsmouth most sincerely for the award of Doctor of Laws (*Honoris Causa*) and, if I may be excused a cricketering term, it's to the people of Portsmouth, of the Portsmouth Diocese and also to those many other players further afield that I should like to raise my bat in salute'.

## **ENDS**

Notes to Editors

For full transcript of oration (Word), further information and photo opportunities please contact:  
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