

PRESS RELEASE

ST JOHN'S ROMAN CATHOLIC CATHEDRAL, PORTSMOUTH

RELEASE IMMEDIATE

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Born and bred in Fordingbridge (Hampshire) where he was also educated and ordained (21 June 1980), Canon David C. Hopgood, Cathedral Dean, prepares to celebrate twenty-five years as a Catholic priest.

STARTS

MAN ON A MISSION

Born and bred in Fordingbridge where he was also educated and ordained to the Catholic priesthood on 21 June 1980, Canon David Charles Hopgood is now preparing for his Silver Jubilee.

Fr. David is the middle of three children – ‘Still that bit older than Mark and always that bit younger than Jane,’ he chuckles. His mother, Ethne (née Coakes) recently moved to the West Country, ‘To be nearer to Jane’, following the death of his father, Francis.

A man of many facets and dedication of purpose, David is a travel and keep fit enthusiast with an artistic flair, especially for architectural renovation. ‘It’s all in the detail,’ he explains with a playful twinkle in his eye. ‘And I love a challenge. Perhaps that’s why I became a priest.’ He laughs contagiously.

Fr. David returned to St. John’s Roman Catholic Cathedral in 1998. He had been Secretary to the late Bishop Emery from 1982 to 1989 following his two initial years as Curate at St. Joseph’s in Aldershot. Since his return to Portsmouth, Fr. David has revitalised the congregation, restored the Cathedral with ambitious works including the acquisition of a new organ and the development of the Cathedral Centre. He had already wetted his appetite for grand design with extensive renovations to the Sacred Heart Church in Fareham where was formerly Parish Priest (1989-1998).

In Portsmouth as well as in his earlier appointments, Fr. David has worked tirelessly in his vocation. ‘These twenty-five years have just flown by,’ comments Fr. David. ‘I have loved every minute ... well, at least most of them.’ He looks pensive for a moment, then smiles broadly at his comment, highly entertained at the thought of: ‘25 years already on God’s mission’.

Fellow priests and the laity from across the Diocese and beyond will gather to give thanks and pay tribute in celebration of Canon David Hopgood’s Silver Jubilee at a special Mass to be held at 7 p.m. on 21 June, St. John’s Roman Catholic Cathedral, Edinburgh Road, Portsmouth.

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Notes to Editors

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