

## **PRESS RELEASE**

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

**RELEASE IMMEDIATE**

**Date of release: 1 May 2006**

The Right Worshipful the Lord Mayor of Portsmouth (Councillor Robin Sparshatt), the Lady Mayoress (Mrs Felicity Sparshatt) and many others attended St John's Catholic Cathedral on Friday 28 April for the Portsmouth launch of *Jesus Laughing and Loving*, an exhibition of paintings from 16 countries celebrating the life and character of Jesus Christ. The exhibition (29 April – 13 May), previously on display at the Edinburgh Fringe, is being complemented by a series of talks for those interested in the synergy between art and prayer.

## **STARTS**

### **Jesus Laughing and Loving**

The Right Worshipful the Lord Mayor of Portsmouth (Councillor Robin Sparshatt) and the Lady Mayoress (Mrs Felicity Sparshatt) were among other dignitaries, members of the clergy and of the laity attending St John's Catholic Cathedral on Friday 28 April for the evening preview and Portsmouth launch of *Jesus Laughing and Loving*, an exhibition of paintings from around the world celebrating the life and character of Jesus Christ.

The paintings from sixteen different countries portray Jesus in different guises from those we are used to in the West. Rather than Jesus suffering on the cross, Jesus meek and mild, knocking on a door, we are presented with images ranging from Jesus ice-skating with Peter to dancing with Martha and Mary.

The exhibition was first shown in the UK at the Edinburgh Festival Fringe in 2004. In response to public demand it returned to the Festival in 2005. In the words of Canon David Hopgood, Dean at St John's, 'And now this stunning exhibition has been brought to our very doorsteps in Portsmouth.'

Having welcomed the evening's guests, Canon David introduced Peter Codling, local artist and keen enthusiast of this initiative, to say a few words. Peter identified the cross-cultural impact, energy and enthusiasm emanating from the exhibition as a whole and from each work in particular. 'We hope,' said Peter, 'that as many people as possible now come along to the Cathedral to appreciate what we have on display.'

Exhibition (free admission) at St John's Cathedral (29 April-13 May):  
Weekdays: 10 am – 5 pm; Saturdays: 10 am – 4 pm; Sundays: Noon – 4 pm.  
Complementary programme of talks (free admission) for those interested in the synergy between art and prayer: 2, 4, 9 & 11 May at 7 pm; 6 & 13 May at 10 am.

## **ENDS**

Notes to Editors

For further information and photo opportunities please contact:  
Canon David Hopgood, Cathedral Dean  
St John's Cathedral, Edinburgh Road, Portsmouth PO1 3HG  
Tel: +44 (0) 23 9282 6613 E-mail: [stjcath@portsmouth-dio.org.uk](mailto:stjcath@portsmouth-dio.org.uk)  
Website: [www.PortsouthCatholicCathedral.org](http://www.PortsouthCatholicCathedral.org)