



Parish priest Monsignor Cyril Murtagh has celebrated 60 years of priesthood

CELEBRATIONS were held at the Church of the Immaculate Conception in Liphook to commemorate the 60 years of priesthood of parish priest Monsignor Cyril Murtagh.

Cyril was ordained on October 27, 1957.

In 1944 an 18-year-old Cyril left school [the Second World War] and was immediately called up to serve in the army, where he remained until 1948.

He then applied for and won a scholarship to Pembroke College, Oxford, where he enjoyed three years reading English.

Undecided on what to do Cyril then, in his own words: "Made the mistake of praying for guidance until I realised the Lord was saying to me: you know perfectly well what next." Having been born in Jersey, Cyril applied to the Portsmouth Diocese to join the priesthood.

He studied for seven years at the Venerable English College in Rome, where he was ordained in 1957, returning to work in the diocese in summer 1958.

Cyril was appointed as Parish Priest of Thornhill and in 1967 was asked to help on the Diocesan Matrimonial Tribunal.

He continued to work in this field until 2002, becoming Tribunal Vicar of the Diocese. Under Bishop Anthony Emery, Father Murtagh was appointed to and became Provost of the Cathedral Chapter, a position he held until he retired when he was 75 years old. The Bishop made him a Prelate of Honour he acquired the title of Monsignor.

Cyril was made Vicar General of the diocese and, on the sudden death of Bishop Emery, he was elected as administrator, effectively running the diocese for ten months until the appointment of Bishop Hollis.

Cyril was a hugely popular parish priest of Petersfield for 28 years until he 'retired' to Liphook in 2002, where he continues to be a tireless source of energy and inspiration.

Cyril is currently the parish priest in Liphook.