

50 years as a priest

There was cause for celebration recently at the church of the Immaculate Conception in Peacehaven when Father Tom Ryan, our parish priest, celebrated the Golden Jubilee of his ordination on Saturday 23rd May 2009.

Exactly 50 years earlier Father Tom was ordained into the Kiltegan Fathers, and then spent his vocation working mostly in Nigeria over the next 41 years as a missionary, mainly in education and seminary formation. He returned to the UK in 2000 and was Superior of the Kiltegan Fathers in East Molesey, Surrey, for three years before offering his services to the Diocese of Arundel and Brighton, whereupon he was appointed to our parish on 17th July 2004.

Following the 6.30pm mass, parishioners gathered in the hall to present Fr Tom with a gift and to throw a large party in commemoration of this special event. Among those present were Fr Anselm and Fr Kasmir from St Paul's Missionary Society, with whom Fr Tom had worked alongside in Nigeria, and Fr Richie Brennan from St. Patrick's Missionary Society.



Fr Tom thanked everyone for the celebration, adding that the weekend was “one I will treasure as a special memory”, and that the gift might inspire a trip to the Holy Land later this year.

Congratulations, Father Tom – we look forward to your diamond jubilee!

Story and photo: Christina Lynn