

Celebration as church hosts service



CEREMONY: Priests and deacons on the steps of Bridport St Mary and St Catherine Church

Ordination is special

A CATHOLIC church was full as it hosted an ordination mass for the first time in its history.

The service took place at Bridport Catholic Church, and was celebrated by the Bishop of Plymouth, the Right Reverend Mark O'Toole.

Reverend O'Toole was joined by catholic priests and deacons, local parishioners, and the family and friends of school teacher Mark Brown.

Mr Brown was ordained as a Deacon, and will now serve the people of the parish under the direction of the bishop and the parish priest, Canon Richard Meyer.

At the mass, a choir of young singers came from St Augustine's School at Weymouth, where Mark teaches.

Speaking on his ordination, Deacon Mark said: "Saturday was an amazing occasion, not least because I was surrounded by so many family, friends and parishioners, all of whom have supported me and influenced me on my journey to or-

By Matthew Bell

dination.

"It was also a joy to have so many of the men who shared the last three years of studies with me at Womersh (near Guildford) attending on Saturday.

"They had travelled from the dioceses of Northampton, Brentwood, Westminster, Southwark, and Arundel and Brighton especially to support me.

"Many of them were able to attend as deacons themselves, having been ordained over the last few weeks.

"Other friends had travelled from all over the country as well as our good friends John and Jill travelling back from South Korea."

During the mass, Mark was clothed by his wife, Helen, and Canon Richard with the traditional vestments of a deacon.

The service was then concluded with a special blessing from the bishop for Mark, Hel-

en and their family.

After the ordination mass, a service was held in a marquee on the lawn of the presbytery next door to the church.

The following day, Deacon Mark preached his first sermon at the parish mass.

There was then another party, where deacon Mark was presented with gifts from the parish.

Mark said: "Everyone commented on the incredible welcome and hospitality given from them by Canon Richard and the parish.

"We are so lucky to have such a committed and wonderful community here.

"Of course, however special an ordination day is, the most important thing is the ministry that will follow.

"I look forward to many years working with and ministering to the amazing people of Bridport."

To find out more about, you can visit bridportcatholics.org.uk