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Divine Honour for Birmingham's Bishop

Posted on Thursday 16th July 2009

The Bishop of Birmingham, the Rt Revd David Urquhart, has been awarded an Honorary Doctorate of Divinity by the University of Birmingham, just three years after his arrival in the city.

The University has awarded 13 honorary degrees this year to people from the worlds of the arts, business, medicine and religion.

Bishop David received his degree from the Vice-Chancellor of the University, Professor David Eastwood at a graduation ceremony on Thursday 16th July at 1.45 pm.

Public Orator, Dr Peter Rock, told the congregation: “When he came to Birmingham, Bishop David said that he would be a 50-50 Bishop; focussing 50% of his time and energy on the city and region and 50% on the life of the Church.

“He is a champion of those who may be marginalised or excluded from society and has spoken and written about the dangers of extremist politics and the needs of asylum seekers. He has also lectured on the values which underpin diversity, especially in an urban context.

“Within the Diocese he plays a pivotal role, encouraging thousands of Christians whom he meets in parishes and churches across the region. He has regular meetings with members of the Bishop’s Youth Council, who are equally as keen to include him in their climbing expeditions as in discussions on deepening their prayer lives.”

Receiving his degree, Bishop David said: “We need skilled, thoughtful, young learners for the renewal of our city with all the enterprise and excellence of a Boulton or Watt, Chamberlain or Austin. Investing in education for innovation must be at the heart of our schools, colleges and universities. I am heartened by many of the young people I meet who have inquiring minds, flair, ambition and vision.

But as well as innovation, there is a further dimension to building the Good City, that of spiritual virtues and moral integrity.”

Search engines and the internet can supply our children with endless knowledge but character and moral courage are harder to access via the web. We need an actual web of trusting relationships, mentors, teachers and leaders, who both practice and preach values of integrity and virtue.”

The Bishop received his honorary degree at a congregation for granduands from History and Archaeology.

ENDS

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