

*Heart speaks
unto heart*



The visit of
POPE BENEDICT XVI

UNITED KINGDOM 2010

Preface

We welcome this booklet, issued in preparation for the visit to the United Kingdom of Pope Benedict XVI. This will be a most historic visit, a Papal Visit with the equivalent status of a State Visit, during which Cardinal John Henry Newman will be declared 'Blessed'.

Newman's motto was 'Heart speaks unto heart.' These words have been chosen as the motto for this Papal Visit. They are most fitting because Pope Benedict comes as a sensitive and eloquent exponent of the invitation to faith in God and faith in Jesus Christ. This invitation to faith is always spoken in the language of the heart. It is profoundly personal, most often softly spoken and not at all imperious.

Yet heart and mind need to go together. There is much to understand about the call of faith; about its unfolding in daily life, about the role of the Catholic Church.

Today there are many gaps in public knowledge in these matters. This booklet seeks to address those gaps, not in a profound or systematic manner but just by way of some clear facts and indications.

We are grateful to those who have put together these short articles. We hope you find them clear. They will be helpful in preparation for this Papal Visit: helpful to those who are curious, helpful to those who need to understand a little more, helpful to those who are looking forward intently to these historic days.

The first fruit of faith in God is prayer. So we ask you to pray for the success of this Visit of Pope Benedict XVI to the UK from 16-19 September 2010.



Archbishop Vincent Nichols –

President of the Bishops' Conference of England and Wales

Cardinal Keith O'Brien – President of the Bishops' Conference of Scotland

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Further information about the Papal Visit can be found at www.thepapalvisit.org.uk

Introduction

How could anything be more thrilling than the electric atmosphere of 1982 when Pope John Paul II came to the United Kingdom and millions lined the streets?



Now, nearly three decades later, we are to receive a Papal Visit which in many ways is even more important because Pope Benedict XVI arrives here on September 16, 2010 at the invitation of Her Majesty the Queen. Her welcome makes this a State Visit.

John Paul II's arrival in the UK made history. He was the first Pope to set foot on these islands in centuries. Now Pope Benedict XVI's visit will cement the goodwill which has grown since and open a new chapter. Now 2010 will see a Pope address the entire population, at the request of the Queen. Truly history in the making.

This is the first time a Pope has visited the UK at the invitation of Her Majesty the Queen. As the Cabinet Secretary wrote to the Archbishop of Westminster "The Papal Visit is a unique event for the UK and will bring immeasurable benefits...the Visit has the equivalent status to a State Visit".

Pope John Paul II came as the leader of the Catholic Church and its chief pastor to greet and address the Catholic community here and, above all, to pray. He celebrated Mass before huge gatherings and prayed at the site of the martyrdom of St Thomas a Becket at Canterbury Cathedral as guest of the then Archbishop Dr Robert Runcie. He also visited the Queen at Buckingham Palace.

The visit of Pope Benedict will be different. He will take part in ecumenical and inter-religious meetings and preside over specifically Catholic events such as the Beatification of John Henry Newman.

But as a guest of Her Majesty he comes primarily as a visitor to all the people of the UK, not just those who are Catholics. On more than one occasion he will speak to the nation as a whole.

As a visiting Head of State he embodies the ancient institution, in international law a state, called the Holy See. There has been residential diplomatic relations with the Holy See since 1479 in a variety of forms. In the modern era, this formal recognition goes back to the time of the First World War.

Many times since, in war and in peace, the British Government and the Holy See have found they have had common interests. They both maintain large networks of diplomats, and receive ambassadors from many countries - in the Holy See's case, from 178 states. This has enabled them to work together on the international stage and to co-operate through international institutions towards common goals. Today they share a concern to combat poverty, protect the environment, advance education and encourage economic development everywhere, which includes eliminating the burden of unfair debt on poor

economies. Both place the defence of human rights in the forefront of their international agendas.

Pope Benedict is a champion of the relevance of faith to the healthy evolution of modern societies. He has set forth a profound analysis of their contemporary problems including an understanding of the opportunities and challenges facing a globalised economy. He is also committed to a lasting and deep improvement of relations between faith communities, an issue in which the Catholic Church has gained vast experience all over the world. Thus there are many points of contact between Catholic thinking and the views of enlightened political leaders, and one of the aims of the Pope's visit will be to encourage such exchanges for the advantage of all.

It is not easy to convey the richness of the tradition of Catholic thought, and Catholicism can easily become defined in the public mind in the light of one or two current controversies. This is the gap in public knowledge that this pamphlet aims to address. Its intention is to make such knowledge about the Catholic faith and the Catholic Church available. It is necessarily limited - the subject could easily fill not just whole books but whole libraries.

Many of the underlying themes of Catholic thought on which Pope Benedict will draw come from a tradition known as Catholic Social Teaching. This is a reservoir of wisdom and insights which has been developed by the Church in the process of applying Gospel truths to contemporary questions of how best we can live together in today's circumstances. It addresses issues of social cohesion, of economic activity, of political processes. It looks at the relationship between rights and duties, and of the importance of a thriving civil society alongside government agencies and the private sector. Among the many pressing contemporary questions it tries to answer are "What is social justice, what is fairness?" Many of its insights, for instance subsidiarity and solidarity, have entered the secular political vocabulary.

This teaching has developed, just as society has developed, from the time of the industrial revolution through to the complex issues raised by the current economic crisis. Its key principle, which it shares with other religious or philosophical systems, is the concept of the "common good." It pays particular attention to what it means to be a human being; to what is required if we are going to fashion a peaceful way of life together, not least in the face of the differences and tensions between peoples. It addresses the causes of widespread poverty and the responsibilities of the wealth creators for the good of all. It takes up issues of the environment and of our duties towards protecting our ecological systems, both for their sustainability and for the benefit of every human being. It speaks of the necessity of virtue and the danger of relying only on rules and regulations. Pope Benedict has made significant contributions to the development of this tradition of Catholic Social Teaching and his work is highlighted in this publication.

The Christian faith has shaped our society and our culture over the last two thousand years. It is not really possible to understand who we are, where we come from or much of what we take for granted, without some appreciation of this historic faith. But more importantly, the Christian faith continues to be lived by enormous numbers of people who find in it the deepest sense of meaning and hope for their lives, and whose faith inspires them to work for justice and to offer generous service to others. The Judeo-Christian tradition continues to be a well-spring of the values and principles which we so clearly need today. This tradition has much to offer to the common good. But at its core, the faith which Pope Benedict comes to proclaim speaks to the heart: to the spiritual quest for meaning and purpose at the heart of every human life. ■

Why is the Pope meeting the Queen?

Her Majesty is the official host of the Papal Visit. She will greet Pope Benedict XVI as an honoured guest and welcome him to Britain formally.

Queen Elizabeth knows the Pope has a message for the people of Britain about renewing the moral basis of society. It is an issue she also cares about deeply.

The constitution gives the Crown special responsibility towards Christianity, as head of the Church of England. It is part of the Monarch's role as a Christian monarch to foster co-operation and tolerance between people of all faiths. Pope Benedict shares such a mission.

The Queen often speaks in her Christmas broadcasts about the role faith can play in making the world better for all of us.

"The Papal Visit is a unique event for the UK and will bring immeasurable benefits...the Visit has the equivalent status to a State Visit"

In her 2007 Christmas Message she said: "Perhaps it was because of this early experience that, throughout his ministry, Jesus of Nazareth reached out and made friends with people whom others ignored or despised. It was in this way that he proclaimed his belief that, in the end, we are all brothers and sisters in one human family... All the great religious teachings of the world press home the message that everyone has a responsibility to care for the vulnerable. Fortunately, there are many groups and individuals, often unsung and unrewarded, who are dedicated to ensuring that the 'outsiders' are given a chance to be recognised and respected."



Queen Elizabeth II greets Pope John Paul II at the Vatican in October 2000. In their meeting the Pope and Queen expressed hopes for Christian unity and the alleviation of poverty.

The Queen paid a memorable State Visit to the Vatican thirty years ago and a less formal visit in the Millennium Year, to mark the 20th anniversary of the earlier one. Those previous meetings symbolised reconciliation in both historical and religious terms; so this Visit of the Pope to the UK will too. They were about learning from history while not being bound by it.

When Queen and Pope mention their common historical inheritance, as they are likely to do in their formal greetings, they are referring to the way in which the traditions which they embody have been closely entwined for a thousand years or more. Sadly, not always so harmoniously: Henry VIII's breach with Rome and events in succeeding reigns caused painful consequences for thousands and led to a bitterness that affected several centuries.

It is important to recall that Queen Elizabeth II is also Queen of Scots, and it will be in Edinburgh that she welcomes Pope Benedict to her United Kingdom. Henry VIII removed the English national church from papal jurisdiction and placed it under the authority of the monarch, later termed the "Supreme Governor." Things went very differently in Scotland. The Presbyterian, or Reformed, Church of Scotland insisted on complete freedom from royal control. The Pope will certainly appreciate the distinction. In Scotland the role of the monarch is not to govern the Church, but to protect its privileges. That is why she is called its "Protector". She is not the Church's head - the Church of Scotland says that is Jesus Christ alone.

As Queen she has many Catholic subjects. There are many issues which concern the Queen and the Pope. They both know, for example, of the difficulties of sustaining an historic tradition in contemporary society, and they both know the personal cost of a lifetime of public service or ministry. They may both feel anxiety about the values needed to underpin the common good. As a symbol of reconciliation and mutual respect, this meeting between Pope and Queen will have a powerful impact on ordinary people.

The Queen and the Pope will have visited many of the same places overseas. The Queen has the title Head of the Commonwealth, a voluntary association of 54 countries working together to promote democracy, human rights, and economic and social development. It is still growing, and its most recent new members, Rwanda and Mozambique, have large Catholic populations. The Pope is leader of a global Church with similar aims, summed up in the term "integral human development", which is present in more than 200 countries worldwide. Throughout the Commonwealth, including the countries which still look to Queen Elizabeth as head of state like Canada, Australia and New Zealand, there are many millions of Catholics. It was to avoid giving offence to his Catholic subjects that King George V insisted on the rewording of the Coronation Oath in 1910 so that it no longer spoke of their religion in disparaging terms.

The Commonwealth is also a cornerstone of the British Government's foreign policy. And co-operation with the Holy See has become an increasingly strong feature of British foreign policy as well. From climate change to African economic development, from education and the promotion of health care to the relief of unfair international debt, the British Government and the Holy See have made common cause. They see each other as influential allies.

As the Queen welcomes the Pope to the Palace of Holyroodhouse, her official Edinburgh residence, their very surroundings will provide a poignant sense of Scottish history. This was the home of Queen Elizabeth's ancestor, the Catholic Mary Queen of Scots before her imprisonment and execution by Elizabeth I, and this is where many of the dramatic and sometimes infamous events of her reign took place. Its Royal Apartments are enriched with mementoes and portraits of famous Scottish kings and Queens, and it was briefly the headquarters of Bonnie Prince Charlie after he launched his Jacobite rebellion in 1745: Youthful portraits of him and his brother Henry Benedict, later Cardinal Duke of York, adorn the Royal Dining Room.

This Papal Visit is a privileged moment for the healing of memories; for rejoicing in, and learning from, an extraordinarily rich shared inheritance; and for forging new relationships based on common interests and mutual respect. ■

What has the Pope got to say about how our Society works?

The Pope and all in the Catholic Church care deeply about our changing society.

Concerns about social justice and cohesion are not just the domain of politicians. They raise big ethical questions about the use, and abuse, of power and money at every level.

The Catholic Church does not claim to have all the answers but its teaching does offer signposts and insights. And it offers a language for thinking and talking about these things.

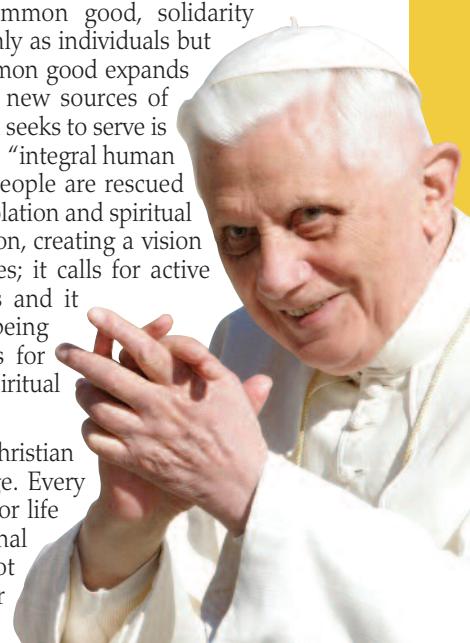
Pope Benedict champions Catholic Social Teaching and everywhere he goes he tries to get a debate going about the health of society – as well as how to address its ills.

Key to this is 'the common good'. The common good refers to that which belongs to us all by virtue of our shared humanity.

The simple definition of the common good is 'the sum total of social conditions which allow people, either as groups or as individuals, to reach their fulfilment more fully and more easily'. (Catechism of the Catholic Church, 1906). Promoting the common good cannot be pursued by treating each individually separately and looking for the highest 'total benefit', in some kind of utilitarian addition. Because we are interdependent, the common good is more like a multiplication sum, where if any one number is zero then the total is always zero. If anyone is left out and deprived of what is essential, then the common good has been betrayed.

The common good is about how to live well together. It is the whole network of social conditions which enable human individuals and groups to flourish and live a fully, genuinely human life. At the heart of the common good, solidarity acknowledges that all are responsible for all, not only as individuals but collectively at every level. The principle of the common good expands our understanding of who we are and opens up new sources of motivation. The fulfilment which the common good seeks to serve is the flourishing of humanity, expressed in the phrase "integral human development". Such development requires that people are rescued from every form of poverty, from hunger to social isolation and spiritual emptiness; it requires the opportunities for education, creating a vision of true partnership and solidarity between peoples; it calls for active participation in economic and political processes and it recognises that every human person is a spiritual being with instincts for love and truth and aspirations for happiness. Development must always include this spiritual growth, with openness to God.

Indeed this notion of development, understood in Christian terms, is the heart of the Christian social message. Every person is called to develop and fulfil themselves, for life itself is a vocation, a summons, which finds its final fulfilment only in the mystery of God. We are not created for futility. Integral human development is our



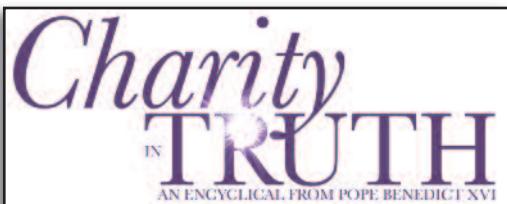
vocation, and it points to the capacity in each person for responsible freedom, a freedom to be formed by truth and used for the service of truth and love.

Another way of putting this is the building up of a “civilisation of love” where everybody matters, no-one is left out and all parts work together to advance the common good. The love Pope Benedict talks about is fraternal, as between brothers and sisters in the same family. But the family he is concerned with is the whole of humankind, in which each member, every person, has their immense and immeasurable human dignity fully respected. As in a family, each person accepts a serious responsibility for the good of the others, which is known in Catholic Social Teaching as the principle of solidarity. But a good family does not interfere in the affairs of its members beyond what is necessary, which is called the principle of subsidiarity. Those whose needs come first in the human family are those least able to help themselves, a principle sometimes called the “preferential option for the poor” (defining “poor” very loosely.) And out of the principle of human dignity comes not only respect for basic human rights, but also the insight, applied to economics, that people are more important than money, labour more important than capital. Sometimes the complexity of society is such that great harm is done by the way things are organised, without anybody intending to do real evil. Catholic Social Teaching calls that “structural sin.”

Using these analytical tools, last year Pope Benedict produced a profound commentary on the economic and financial crisis that had shaken to the core the world’s faith in globalisation and market economics. In his encyclical letter *Caritas in Veritate* he showed how the mistakes made by bankers and financiers were reflections of a wider failure in society at large. The pursuit of self-interest regardless of consequences was not confined to Wall Street and the City of London. The market system demanded by a business economy depended on the existence of a minimal level of trust, he said. But economic activity, based on participants seeking to increase their profits, could not of itself create trust. That had to be present already in the wider culture. Furthermore the absence of any sense of obligation towards the interests of the other party tended to erode trust further, first within the economic system and then in society at large. Trust, sometimes called social capital, was being used up and not replaced. Individualism - one against all - was fragmenting society. Eventually such a system was bound to become unstable.

So the economic crisis wasn’t a baffling mystery or an act of God; it had rational causes. Nor were these simply technical deficiencies in our economic theory, but moral deficiencies, flaws in human nature. Thus did Pope Benedict raise the debate about the crisis to new levels. Many people instinctively felt he was right and also that he had identified what needed to be done.

Instead of giving first place to “liberty”, for instance as stressed by libertarians or upholders of free market economics, or “equality”, the priority on the political Left; Catholic teaching puts the emphasis on “relationships”. It is not Right or Left, nor is it a Third Way. Instead, it is an alternative way of understanding how to run our social, economic and political affairs – the fraternal way. To Benedict “Life in its true sense ... is a relationship”, and depends in relationships from birth to death. It is from our relationships we acquire the practical capacity to participate in any social setting whatever – language, culture,





Union members march and rally for jobs in Lansing, Michigan, in June 2009. When Pope Benedict XVI released his third encyclical 'Caritas in Veritate' ('Charity in Truth'), he stressed that the voice of workers must be heard as heads of state, industry moguls, labour union leaders and environmentalists develop long-term solutions for the ailing global economy.

knowledge, know-how. It is only through our social relations that some of our deepest human needs can be realised – to be nurtured and educated, to love and be loved, to give, to receive and to share, to trust and become worthy of trust, to be recognised for oneself and to confer recognition on the value of the Other.

These benefits cannot be bought, schemed for, or coerced. But they can be undermined quite easily. Inequality may grow to the point where it undermines solidarity, and the rich and poor no longer seem to live on the same planet. With inequality of wealth and income goes inequality of power and control over one's own life. Eventually one person's freedom is at the expense of another, and those at the bottom find it is no longer possible to overcome their disadvantages. Very likely, they just go deeper into debt. In this way the common good is undermined.

At the heart of the vision of the common good espoused by Pope Benedict is a radical understanding of what it means to be human. It is set against an ideology that tells us our happiness lies in consumption and material wealth, and it invites us to reflect on how to find a better balance that puts the human good of family, community and society at the centre. At a time of economic struggle and difficulty for very many people, this insight into what really makes for human happiness and the common good offers all of us fresh hope and a new vision. ■

Why are there different churches?

One of the main themes of the Pope's visit will be relations between all the different Christian Churches in the United Kingdom, a theme called "ecumenism".

Divisions are part of the long history of Christianity, not only in this country but throughout the world.

The divisions we see most clearly in the United Kingdom are those which arose at the time of the Reformation. It was a period in the sixteenth century when disagreements between different convictions of belief within the Catholic Church became so deep and bitter that a break-up of the Church in Europe took place. The exact causes of these breaks are much studied and are given different interpretations. But in England the causes were intertwined with the political challenges facing King Henry VIII, whereas in Scotland the issues were more focussed on questions of doctrine.

In Europe, the challenges to Catholic teaching came from a number of reformers, the best known of whom were Martin Luther and John Calvin. These challenges also came about at a time of the strengthening of the nation state and so many of the churches that emerged at that time took on a status which connected them closely to the identity of the state or nation in which they developed.

These divisions, which still exist today, do not make sense unless we understand the passion for the truth - on both sides - that underlies them. Our culture is often suspicious of any claims to objective truth, preferring the idea that each person can have their own version of the truth as long as we are all tolerant of each other.

But the Christian perspective rejects such a proposal and instead insists that people are endowed with reason and an inbuilt desire for the truth. Christians believe that God has chosen to give us, in Jesus Christ, a revelation of the truth about ourselves and about the mystery of God. The whole truth of that mystery is beyond human comprehension, but among the various attempts to approach it, some get nearer to the heart than others. That is where the arguing often starts. Many of these arguments are not just between Churches and denominations but also internal to them.

The work of ecumenism is the task of overcoming the divisions between Christians and striving to find again a way of living in visible harmony and, indeed, visible unity. The aspects of the truth that each distinct Church or community believes it has preserved are too important simply to be set aside. The ecumenical method followed by the Churches involves digging deeper into the truth, enabling us to recognise in each other those aspects of the truth which we already share, and those aspects of the truth which we believe we hold in trust for each other. We learn in the process that there are insights possessed by our ecumenical partners that we also can value. This is why ecumenism at its best becomes a mutual exchange of spiritual gifts.

This is a difficult pathway, for each of the Christian communities is deeply committed to the truth it holds and no amount of power-play or negotiation will alter those commitments. Rather the key to ecumenism lies in the shared conviction that in Christ is the truth we all seek and our common search is to know him, love him and serve him as best we can. So it is that Christians increasingly pray together before the Lord; work together in service of him; study together to deepen a shared understanding and

appreciation of what still divides us; accept each other's faults and failings, and ask forgiveness for past wrongs. Pope Benedict is profoundly committed to all these tasks.

The deepest divisions, not surprisingly, concern those matters in which we are drawn closest to Christ, especially in the Eucharist; the Sacrament of Christ's abiding presence among us. Catholics believe that the Eucharist actually "makes" the Church. The Church as a visible and ordered society, a true communion, is found most clearly in the Eucharist. For this reason when Catholic celebrate the Mass only those "in full communion" with the Catholic Church are usually invited to receive Holy Communion, even though all are invited to participate in the hearing of the Word of God and in the offering of the Sacrifice of the Mass itself.

There will be a significant moment in Westminster Abbey when members of all the different Churches and Christian communities join with the Pope to pray together and to ask for God's blessing. They will be united in prayer in a way that transcends all their divisions.

There will be another important "ecumenical" event, too. This will take place at Lambeth Palace when Pope Benedict will visit the Archbishop of Canterbury and will meet with bishops of the Anglican Communion together with bishops of the Catholic Church in England, Wales and Scotland. There is a special relationship between the Anglican Communion and the Catholic Church, for they share many common aspects of the



Anglican Archbishop Rowan Williams of Canterbury presents a gift to Pope Benedict XVI at the Vatican in November 2006.

Catholic tradition and have been following a process of study and growing closer over the last forty years. Many points of agreement have been identified, even as new difficulties have arisen. Recently the Pope and the Archbishop of Canterbury reached formal agreement to begin another stage in the dialogue between the two, known as the Third Anglican Roman Catholic International Commission (ARCIC). Both are committed in faith to persevere, until, in Our Lord's own words, "They may all be one." While full doctrinal agreement has proved elusive, over the 40 years of progress our personal relationships have been gradually transformed. Members of different churches now embrace each other as friends and allies instead of as rivals or even enemies.

The visit of Pope Benedict is a great occasion for presenting the Christian Gospel as a vital part of life in modern Britain today. Yet the divisions among Christians can inhibit the effectiveness of this presentation. So the work of the Churches to overcome these divisions is important. In a society in which there are still serious tensions, the example of the Churches' own efforts in overcoming division is part of the witness we can give. ■

Why is Pope Benedict meeting leaders of other religions?

Catholic teaching on other faiths was set down in the document *Nostra Aetate* of the Second Vatican Council (1965),

It says: "The Catholic Church rejects nothing that is true and holy in these religions. She regards with sincere reverence those ways of conduct and of life, those precepts and teachings which, though differing in many aspects from the ones she holds and sets forth, nonetheless often reflect a ray of that Truth which enlightens all men."

On his visit to Jordan in 2009, Pope Benedict entered the Al-Hussein Bin Talal mosque and said such places of worship "stand out like jewels across the earth's surface." Using language which is familiar to many Muslims, he referred to God as "the merciful and compassionate".

He said: "From the ancient to the modern, the magnificent to the humble, they all point to the divine, to the Transcendent One, to the Almighty. And through the centuries these sanctuaries have drawn men and women into their sacred space to pause, to pray, to acknowledge the presence of the Almighty, and to recognize that we are all his creatures."

But this respect is not achieved by regarding all faiths as "equally true", because that can easily mean they are all equally unimportant. In 2010 the Catholic Bishops of England and Wales published the document *Meeting God in Friend and Stranger* to encourage Catholics in good inter-faith relations and to avoid this sort of misunderstanding. They stated: "The challenge of difference, the task of meeting the followers of another religion in true dialogue, is the demanding one of combining genuine love and respect, and openness to unexpected truth and goodness, with a firm grasp of our own Christian faith and a readiness to be led by its light."

This teaching document highlights two guiding principles at work in such dialogue. The first is the vision of all humanity belonging to a single "family", sharing an origin and destiny in the mystery of God. The second is the principle that the Holy Spirit of God is at work everywhere, free-flowing and creative. Since, in Christian understanding, the Holy Spirit is most fully present in Jesus Christ, the Eternal Word made flesh, then an openness to the Spirit, wherever it is fruitful, is at the same time in Catholic eyes an acknowledgement of a relationship of that fruitfulness to Christ. This acknowledgement of the work of the Holy Spirit within the unity of the human family is the foundation for profound respect between all the faiths.

But sincere respect is not the only element in these relationships. Pope Benedict has described how central religious faiths are in the building up of civil society, in the interests of the common good. In his 2009 encyclical *Caritas in Veritate* he declared: "There is a good that is linked to living in society: the common good. It is the good of 'all of us', made up of individuals, families and intermediate groups who together constitute society... To take a stand for the common good is on the one hand to be solicitous for, and on the other hand to avail oneself of, that complex of institutions that give structure to the life of society, juridically, civilly, politically and culturally, making it the *polis*, or 'city'." Clearly the Catholic Church's concern for the welfare of other faith communities is directed also at the good of society as a whole.

Others, too, can see this in the Church's mission. The Chief Rabbi of the United Hebrew



Prince Ghazi Muhammad bin Talal applauds as Pope Benedict XVI gives a speech after visiting the new King Hussein Mosque in Amman, Jordan, (May 2009). In his talk the Pope said faith calls both Christians and Muslims to respect each other and join together to promote the common good.

Congregations, Lord Sacks, welcomed the Catholic pre-election document *Choosing the Common Good* in a radio broadcast by saying that it reminded him of another better meaning of the word "politics".

"There's an older sense in which it has to do with the *polis*, the city, or what today we'd call society. And that's less about competition than co-operation, less about power than about what holds us together through a sense of collective identity and shared fate. It's what unites us regardless of the way we vote. It's about the common good."

"And that depends not just on governments but on us, all of us together. It lives in habits of the heart born in families, practiced in neighbourhoods, and renewed daily in unspectacular acts of kindness and help. If we lose these, no legislation in the world can put them back again."

The Chief Rabbi's warm words were all the more fitting, as nowhere has there been a greater change for the better than in relations between Catholics and Jews. The Church has repudiated and condemned anti-Semitism and the "teaching of contempt" towards Jews. The Second Vatican Council declared: "God holds the Jews most dear for the sake of their Fathers; He does not repent of the gifts He makes or of the calls He issues... the Church awaits that day, known to God alone, on which all peoples will address the Lord in a single voice and 'serve him shoulder to shoulder'."

It is in this spirit and as a service to the common good that Pope Benedict will greet leaders from the different British faith communities during his visit to Britain. The role of leaders, in every sector of society, is not to be underestimated. And the exercise of true leadership is enriched when the leader is a person of faith. Indeed in his recent social encyclical *Caritas in Veritate*, Pope Benedict declared that "development is impossible without upright men and women, without financiers and politicians whose consciences are finely attuned to the requirements of the common good". This visit of Pope Benedict, and his meeting with the leaders of the different faith communities, will highlight the contribution which faith makes to the common good of all. Faith in God is not a problem to be solved, but an enriching

What is the Holy See and its contribution worldwide?

The contribution of the Catholic Church springs from the lives of prayer, witness and service led by millions worldwide, lives inspired by their faith to live the Gospel's message to love their neighbour.

The Catholic Church plays a unique role in the world too. It delivers health and education services at grassroots level as well as engaging world leaders on global issues like climate change and ending conflict. Its global presence also gives the Catholic Church a unique position in the fight against poverty.

The Pope is the ruler of both the Vatican City State and the Holy See. The Vatican City State is an independent territory in Rome of less than a fifth of a square mile. The Holy See is a sovereign entity which acts and speaks for the whole Catholic Church. It is also recognised under international law as a sovereign legal entity enjoying diplomatic relations with 178 states. It is recognised as a permanent observer at the United Nations.

The Holy See is a sovereign entity with an unusually large global reach. The Catholic Church is a force on the world stage: a global religious institution with over 1.2 billion adherents (17.5% of the world's population, including over 10% of the UK population); reach into every corner of the planet through its 400,000 priests, 800,000 sisters/nuns, 219,655 parishes; serious influence in many countries and two generations of intense experience in inter-faith dialogue and many centuries of co-existence. The Holy See is one of the world's oldest organizations with a continuous history from the period of the Emperor Constantine in the Fourth Century AD.

The Crown's first resident ambassador was sent to the Pope in 1479, making the embassy to the Holy See the UK's oldest embassy. John Shirwood was appointed by King Edward IV as the first resident Ambassador to the Holy See. Formal diplomatic relations between the Crown and the Holy See were interrupted in 1536. Formal diplomatic links were restored in 1553, but ceased again in 1559 until they were restored in 1914. However, unofficial ties between the UK and the Holy See were maintained through much of the 18th and 19th centuries: for example, Lord Odo Russell was the UK's un-official Minister to the Holy See from 1858 to 1870.

The United Kingdom re-established formal resident diplomatic relations with the Holy See in 1914.

Pope Benedict keeps coming back to a number of themes in his speeches which are important for him. Probably the most central and over-arching is the very nature between the secular and religious in the Western tradition. Other issues flow from that central theme and find tangible application, for example on climate change, international development or disarmament. The Holy See is often at the cutting edge of policy making on many international issues.

The Holy See is a crucial partner to the international community for the delivery of the Millennium Development Goals by 2015. To this end, the Pope has regularly written to world leaders ahead of crucial G8 and G20 summits reminding them not to forget the plight of the poor in the developing world. Overall aid increases and debt cancellation have helped to get 40 million more children into school. The number of people with access to AIDS treatment has increased from just 100,000 to over four million. The proportion of the world's population living in poverty has fallen from a third to a quarter.

The Holy See's contribution is key to that continuing success. The Catholic Church alone is the world's second largest international development body after the UN. Caritas Internationalis is a Vatican body which brings together some 160 national Catholic Aid agencies under a single umbrella (including CAFOD in England & Wales and SCIAF in Scotland). More than 50% of the hospitals in Africa are operated under the auspices of faith-based organisations, with the Catholic Church in Africa being responsible for nearly one quarter of all health care provision. The Catholic Church is one of the biggest global health providers. It runs 5,246 hospitals, 17,530 dispensaries, 577 leprosy clinics, 15,208 houses for the elderly, chronically ill and people with physical and learning disabilities worldwide. Catholic Church agencies provide a quarter of all HIV care in Africa. In education too, the Catholic Church provides around 12 million school places in Sub Saharan Africa each year thereby offering educational opportunities to many millions of young people to get out of poverty.

The UK has worked closely with the Holy See to develop new ways to finance international development. The International Finance Facility - IFF - is a novel way to use the capital markets to front load development spending. The concept was launched at the Vatican in 2004. At that time, Pope John Paul II gave the concept his full moral support. In November 2006, Pope Benedict went one step further and gave it his full practical support when he bought the first Immunisation Bond. The Bond raised over \$1.6 billion to spend on health and immunisation programmes in 70 of the world's poorest countries. The funds raised will prevent five million child deaths between 2006 and 2015, and more than five million future adult deaths by protecting more than 500 million children in campaigns against measles, tetanus, and yellow fever. Pope Benedict's participation from the very outset helped spread the global message about the Bond and make it a success.

As the world's first carbon-neutral state, the Vatican City State has been at the forefront of international efforts to protect the environment and tackle climate change. Pope Benedict's 2009 Encyclical *Caritas in Veritate* focused strongly on environmental issues, calling on the international community to counter mistreatment of the environment, to work to ensure that the costs of exploiting resources are borne by those who incur them, not by future generations; and stressing that the protection of the environment and the climate requires full international co-operation, including with the weakest regions of the world.

The Holy See has also led on practical steps. The Vatican City State is the world's first carbon neutral state through offsetting its emissions through the planting of trees and installing solar panels on the Vatican's rooftops. It also recently announced plans to build Europe's largest solar farm on 740 hectares to the north of Rome. That solar farm will produce enough energy to power over 40,000 homes and exceed the EU's renewable energy targets of 20



Solar panels are seen from the roof of the Paul VI Audience Hall at the Vatican.

percent of demand by 2020. The UK is working with the Holy See in building up our South America Climate Change Network, which aims to raise awareness of climate change throughout Latin America.

But as important as those practical steps are, the real influence of the Holy See rests in its moral weight. Climate change is a curious mix of moral cause and strategic interest and the moral dimension is crucial in addressing climate change. Why? Because action can be motivated in any number of ways; some will be persuaded by self-interest through the economic or scientific evidence. But historically it has always been the moral argument that shifts the momentum toward political and social action in righting a wrong. That was illustrated most clearly by William Wilberforce in his successful efforts to outlaw slavery.

The UK has worked closely with the Holy See to develop new ways to finance international development. The International Finance Facility - IFF - is a novel way to use the capital markets to front load development spending

On the disarmament agenda, the Holy See played a crucial role in achieving the international consensus required to agree a Treaty on Cluster Munitions in 2008. Over 100 states have now signed up to the Treaty, with the Holy See among the first to do so. More recently, in 2009 the Holy See played an important role in encouraging 153 states to support a UN General Assembly Resolution on moving ahead with an Arms Trade Treaty.

Again, on 30 October 2009, the Holy See was key in getting 153 states to vote in favour of a resolution at the UN General Assembly on moving ahead with an Arms Trade Treaty. The resolution was passed with only 1 state voting against and 19 abstaining. That vote on 30 October in New York brought us a step closer to what Pope Benedict called for in 2008 when he said, "I exhort all persons involved in the sale or traffic of arms, with interests that are often extremely lucrative, to ask themselves what are the consequences engendered by their behaviour." He continued, "May the international community commit itself in this field together with the local authorities so that peace in all countries will gain ground every day."

The United Nations Development Programme estimates that up to one thousand people a day – mostly children and women – are killed because of the flow of illicit arms. And in the last three years, it is estimated that over 2.1 million have died from armed violence. From the very outset, the Holy See has been a strong supporter of the Arms Trade Treaty.

The purpose of the Church as the body of Christ is to witness to the love of God for humanity, recognising that every human person is a brother and sister, a member of a single human family whose origin and destiny lies in God. As a global community through its institutional life, expressed particularly in the work of the Holy See as the instrument of that unity at the global level, the Church stands for the moral integrity and dignity of the human person. On the political stage the Church can speak and act at the service of truth and justice, recalling the moral obligations of those in power to serve the common good. Through its witness to our common humanity, therefore, the Holy See is in a unique position to help the international community face the many challenges it confronts. ■

What is the Catholic contribution to British society?

Catholics do not walk around with the label “Catholic” on their foreheads. Nor do they conform to any popular stereotypes. They are, in short, very like the rest of the population.

They are an almost identical cross-section in terms of age, income, class and educational background.

But there are still some statistical differences. They are more concentrated in cities, less in rural areas. And the Catholic community is more racially diverse than the population as a whole, as a glance at the typical congregation at Sunday Mass will tell you.

The Catholic community's contribution to the rest of society is partly expressed through Catholic Charities, schools and welfare agencies, in community building work of parishes and informal care. But many Catholics carry their faith inspiration into their secular work. The 10 per cent of the total population of England and Wales and 17 per cent in Scotland (about six million people in total) who define themselves as Catholics work in every type of job - as teachers, nurses, police, soldiers, civil servants, journalists, doctors, MPs, road sweepers or bankers; and they join every type of voluntary organisation, from Scouts to sport, Neighbourhood Watch to St John Ambulance.

So statistics which tell you about the organised and “official” Catholic contribution to society do not tell the whole story. Nevertheless it is a story to be proud of. It is hard to put a meaningful financial figure on the size of this contribution, however, as on the one hand Catholic agencies receive funding from the state as well as from the Church, and on the other, a great deal of it depends on the efforts of unpaid volunteers. For instance one major domestic charity concerned with the relief of poverty, the Society of St Vincent de Paul, estimates that its members put in a million hours of unpaid work a year, worth tens of millions of pounds if it had to be paid for. And that time is certainly as valuable as the actual money they are able to dispense to those in need.

Caritas Social Action Network (CSAN) is an agency of the Catholic Bishops' Conference of England and Wales and the umbrella organisation for organisations and charities with a Catholic ethos providing social care in England and Wales. The net total expenditure on charitable activities by CSAN's members in 2008-9 was around £110 million. Services provided by these member charities range from the cradle to the grave, including fostering and adoption, social work with children and families, child protection, school counselling, and family centres. They help older people, those with learning disabilities or impairment of hearing or sight, and work with refugees, immigrants and prisoners. They also run numerous community projects. Like other charities, they receive some local and national Government funding: In Scotland the Mungo Foundation, based in Glasgow, operates forty such projects with an overall annual expenditure of just over £16 million.





Supporting Seafarers Worldwide

the provision of education. There are 2300 Catholic Schools in England and Wales, 1,844 are primary, 389 are secondary and 17 are sixth form colleges; there are also 153 are Catholic Independent Schools, including nine special schools and four academies, and a number of institutions of higher education. About 30 percent of children in Catholic schools are not themselves Catholic. Though largely supported by the state, the Catholic community raises some £20 million a year as its share of the cost of building maintenance on these schools. A similar picture applies to Scotland, where approximately 20 per cent of the school population are educated in 387 Catholic schools (325 primary, 53 secondary, 6 ASN & 3 Independent). With the exception of one Jewish school, there are no other "faith schools" in Scotland. This sector is fully maintained by the Scottish Education Authorities.

One of the best known agencies of the Catholic Church in England and Wales is CAFOD (Catholic Agency for Overseas Development). It is one of the United Kingdom's major relief and development agencies. Around 75% of CAFOD's £47.4 million income in 2009 was derived from voluntary donations. CAFOD runs more than 1,000 projects in 75 countries, and works in co-operation with the international Catholic network of relief agencies (CARITAS)

and development agencies (CIDSE). Its Scottish equivalent, the Scottish Catholic International Aid Fund, awarded a total of £4,204,000 in development grants to its partners overseas in 2008. Both CAFOD and SCIAF rely on tens of thousands of volunteers, both for raising funds and for campaigning. They have been at the heart of numerous British campaigns to raise awareness of overseas development issues, such as Make Poverty History, and they are very active on green issues like global warming. CAFOD and SCIAF are closely associated with the international Justice and Peace movement, which has groups in many Catholic parishes.

Finally, there are 3,000 Catholic parish churches in Great Britain, with 4,400 active Diocesan priests and 811 who are retired, more than 5,000 members of female religious orders (nuns or sisters), and 1,069 religious priests (members of male religious orders). These parishes are places of countless acts of kindness, community strengthening and family support, not unique to Catholic parishes of course but characteristic of them. ■

Charities which Catholics support range from the Apostleship of the Sea – which gives vital assistance to 300,000 seafarers visiting British ports annually – to Housing Justice (formed partly from the Catholic Housing Aid Society) which is a national network of branches providing free professional advice to people who are homeless and in acute housing need.

The Catholic Church makes a major contribution to

CAFOD
Just one world

SCIAF
Scotland's aid agency

What about child protection?

The Catholic Church is shocked and ashamed by the scandal of child abuse committed by clergy and other people in positions of trust in Church institutions. It is no less distressed by the fact that in some cases those in authority failed to stop abuse as soon as it was known. That shame and distress centres on the damage done to every single abused child. Abuse damages, often irrevocably, a child's ability to trust, to fashion stable relationships, to sustain self-esteem. When it is inflicted within a religious context it rightly attracts deep anger because of the profound betrayal of trust involved. The Church has to confront its own failings and to take effective action at every level. In this country that process started some years ago.

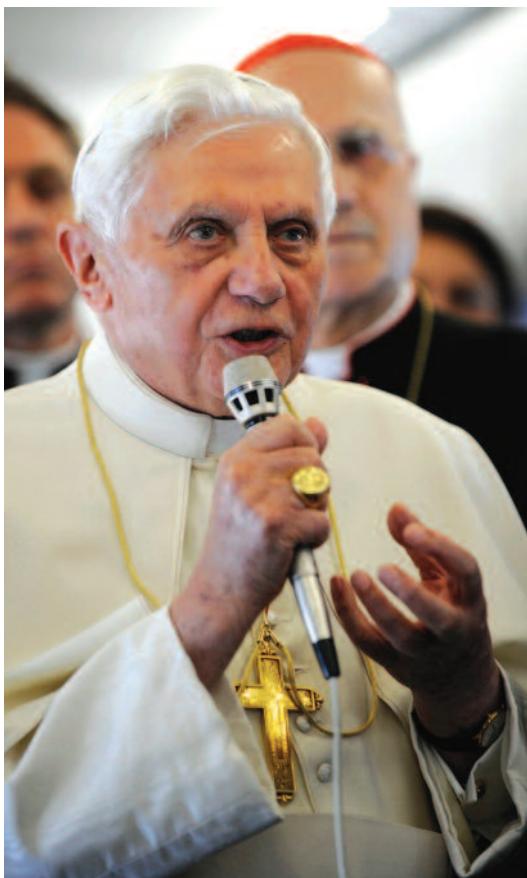
Speaking in May 2010 on the way to a Papal Visit in Portugal Pope Benedict made a forthright statement about the gravity of this issue. He said:

"Today we see in a truly terrifying way that the greatest persecution of the Church does not come from outside enemies, but is born of sin within the Church. The church needs to profoundly relearn penitence, accept purification, learn forgiveness but also justice."

The Holy Father's comments are of the same directness as an earlier statement made by the Bishops' Conference of England and Wales at the end of their Spring meeting in April 2010, reflecting on the unfolding stories of abuse in different countries. Their statement reads as follows:

Child abuse in the Catholic Church has been such a focus of public attention recently, that we, the Bishops of England and Wales, wish to address this issue directly and unambiguously.

Catholics are members of a single universal body. These terrible crimes, and the inadequate response by some church leaders, grieve us all.



Pope Benedict XVI speaks to reporters on a plane en route to Portugal in May. The Pope made some of his strongest remarks to date on the sex abuse cases during an in-flight press conference en route to his four-day visit.

Our first thoughts are for all who have suffered from the horror of these crimes, which inflict such severe and lasting wounds. They are uppermost in our prayer. The distress we feel at what has happened is nothing in comparison with the suffering of those who have been abused.

The criminal offences committed by some priests and religious are a profound scandal. They bring deep shame to the whole church. But shame is not enough. The abuse of children is a grievous sin against God. Therefore we focus not on shame but on our sorrow for these sins. They are the personal sins of only a very few. But we are bound together in the Body of Christ and, therefore, their sins touch us all.

We express our heartfelt apology and deep sorrow to those who have suffered abuse, those who have felt ignored, disbelieved or betrayed. We ask their pardon, and the pardon of God for these terrible deeds done in our midst. There can be no excuses.

Furthermore, we recognise the failings of some Bishops and Religious leaders in handling these matters. These, too, are aspects of this tragedy which we deeply regret and for which we apologise. The procedures now in place in our countries highlight what should have been done straightaway in the past. Full co-operation with statutory bodies is essential.

Now, we believe, is a time for deep prayer of reparation and atonement. We invite Catholics in England and Wales to make the four Fridays in May 2010 special days of prayer. Even when we are lost for words, we can place ourselves in silent prayer. We invite Catholics on these days to come before the Blessed Sacrament in our parishes to pray to God for healing, forgiveness and a renewed dedication. We pray for all who have suffered abuse; for those who mishandled these matters and added to the suffering of those affected. From this prayer we do not exclude those who have committed these sins of abuse. They have a journey of repentance and atonement to make.

We pray also for Pope Benedict, whose wise and courageous leadership is so important for the Church at this time.

In our dioceses we will continue to make every effort, working with our safeguarding commissions, to identify any further steps we can take, especially concerning the care of those who have suffered abuse, including anyone yet to come forward with their account of their painful and wounded past. We are committed to continuing the work of safeguarding, and are determined to maintain openness and transparency, in close co-operation with the statutory authorities in our countries. We thank the thousands who give generously of their time and effort to the Church's safeguarding work in our parishes and dioceses.

We commit ourselves afresh to the service of children, young people and the vulnerable in our communities. We have faith and hope in the future. The Catholic Church abounds in people, both laity, religious and clergy, of great dedication, energy and generosity who serve in parishes, schools, youth ventures and the care of elderly people. We also thank them. The Holy Spirit guides us to sorrow and repentance, to a firm determination to better ways, and to a renewal of love and generosity towards all in need.

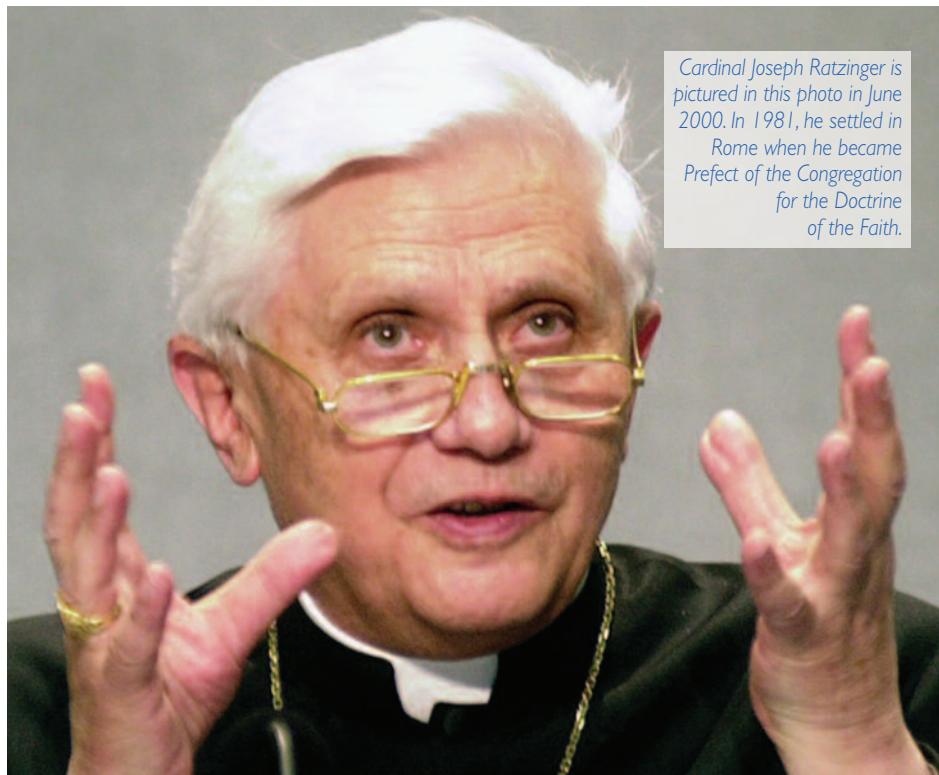
Cardinal O'Brien, Archbishop of St Andrews and Edinburgh, in his Easter sermon and acting in his capacity as President of the Scottish Bishops' Conference, made similar points. In England and Wales, since 2001, and likewise in Scotland the agreed policy followed by the bishops has been to report all allegations of child abuse, no matter from how far back in the past, to the police or local authority social services departments. By doing so, and by having clear protection procedures in place in every parish as well as independent supervision at diocesan and national level, they have built up good relationships with those

authorities in these matters, including, in some areas, cooperation in the supervision of offenders in the community.

Every year since 2002 the Catholic Church in England and Wales has made public the exact number of allegations made within the Church, the number reported to the police, the action taken and the outcome. No other body or organisation in this country does this. This is not a cover-up; it is clear and total disclosure. The purpose is not to defend the Church. It is to make plain that in the Catholic Church in England and Wales there is no hiding place for those who seek to harm children.

What of the role of Pope Benedict? When he was in charge of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith he led important changes made to Church law: the inclusion in canon law of internet offences against children, the extension of child abuse offences to include the sexual abuse of all under 18 years of age, the case by case waiving of the statute of limitation, and the establishment of a fast-track dismissal from the clerical state for offenders.

As is well recognised, the problem of child abuse is sadly widespread. Most abuse takes place within families and dealing with the underlying causes of this is a profoundly urgent and difficult thing. But even one case of abuse within the Church is too many. One broken child is a tragedy and a disgrace. One case alone is enough to justify anger and outrage. The work of safeguarding, needed within any organisation and within our society as a whole, is demanding but absolutely necessary. It can never be relaxed. It is becoming a permanent part of the life of the Catholic Church. ■



Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger is pictured in this photo in June 2000. In 1981, he settled in Rome when he became Prefect of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith.

Why are there Catholic schools and colleges?

Education's gradual growth in Britain from the 18th century means the system wasn't born in one piece and then set up throughout the country.

Our present state education system was initially based on schools funded and staffed by the various Churches, as well as industrialists and the labour movement from the start of the nineteenth century.

Only in 1902 did these networks become loosely connected together into the beginnings of a proper school system.

The advantage for those committed enough to set schools up was that they retained a measure of control over them. This of course meant big differences in what was taught and how, including skills and moral values, even down to what pupils were admitted.

By the mid 19th century ,with the influx of destitute and often illiterate Irish immigrants pouring into the major British cities to escape the Irish famine, the Catholic Church recognised the need to rapidly extend its network of schools. From 1852 the official policy of the Catholic Church in England and Wales was that where both were needed, new schools should be built before new churches. At first these schools were wholly paid for by donations of the faithful, who were often themselves very poor. Only gradually - amidst some controversy - did the government begin to offer a financial contribution. Even now, with formal arrangements for the running costs of Catholic schools in the state sector met by local education authorities, the Church still contributes to the capital costs of the buildings. If Catholic schools were ever abolished, taxpayers would have to make good this lost church contribution towards buildings and the land on which many catholic schools are built. It is for this reason that, far from the general taxpayer subsidising the Catholic school system, Catholics subsidise the schools system by their extra contributions to fund school buildings, over and above the normal taxes paid by them as ordinary citizens. A similar history of educational provision by the Church occurred in Scotland, but the settlement with the Scottish Education Authorities took on a different form, whereby no financial contribution from the Church is required. The Church Authorities are entitled by law to approve the appointment of teachers to Catholic Schools. The Scottish Education Service liaises with the Education Authorities to ensure that the service which the school provides is in conformity with Catholic teaching and ethos.

Catholic education took off in the latter part of the 19th century, though there was still discrimination against it. For example, Oxford or Cambridge Universities did not allow Catholics to graduate until 1870. This is why the Church pressed ahead with primary schooling. It is also why John Henry Newman wrote his *Idea of a University*. Newman's description of an ideal learning environment remains a classic text in educational theory today, though his main interest lay in providing for Catholic students as good an education as Oxbridge would have provided. He believed learning was for life, not just for the acquisition of skills. Formation of character was as important as imparting knowledge. While he envisaged specialisation in higher education, an understanding of the relationship

The Catholic system remains the single most significant exception to the view that there should be a uniform educational culture in Britain today.

between subjects and how they fitted together was equally important. Knowledge was good “for its own sake”, not for the economic benefits it might bring.

Voluntary foundations were possible because the gradual development of education allowed for the expression of difference. It allowed for *subsidiarity* before the term was coined. This meant a lot more than the absence of central control. It enabled parents working with the Church to devote their gifts to opening schools. The Church never forgets that the first and primary educators of children are their parents, and technically schools act on their behalf, *in loco parentis*. Children do not belong to the state. Rather it is the role of the state to support and supplement this fundamental duty of parents.

Why should the Catholic Church and especially its teaching Orders have attached so much importance to running its own schools and colleges? Newman’s answer was that none would be a *Catholic* institution “unless the Church breathes her own pure and unearthly spirit into it, and fashions and moulds its organisation, and watches over its teachings, and knits together its pupils, and superintends its actions.” Today, that is still at the heart of the Catholic ethos of our schools, and why it matters.

Catholic schools are popular not only with Catholic families but also with many others. There is often an excess of applications for places in Catholic schools. The Church’s policy throughout the Catholic part of the State system is to give Catholic children equal access to their Catholic schools without undue discrimination whether, for example, by ability or parental background. In so doing it adheres to the national Schools Admissions Code. The overall statistical evidence suggests this policy is successful, and the ratio of children receiving free school meals, a common measure of social disadvantage, is similar to that across all maintained schools.

From the late 1970s onwards, maintained education at all levels in England and Wales underwent much change. The government took more direct control over, examinations, inspection, and teacher training. It established a National Curriculum for the first time, and introduced Standard Assessment Tests. Less money was held centrally by local authorities and more had to be delegated to schools. Schools could opt out of local authority control and new types of school became possible within the maintained system and working at arm’s length from central control. It is argued that, these measures certainly helped raised standards but the extent to which they enabled a genuine diversity in education to be provided is more questionable. The Catholic system remains the single most significant exception to the view that there should be a uniform educational culture in Britain today.

So what is Catholic education for? Firstly, it is for what Pope Benedict’s Encyclical *Caritas in Veritate* called “integral human development” – intellectual, physical, social and spiritual – of every pupil and student within it. And this includes nearly one third of children in Catholic schools who come from other faiths. Secondly, Catholic schools aim to promote community cohesion, to overcome the deficit in social solidarity throughout our countries. Many inner city Catholics schools are examples of racial diversity, with pupils of numerous different languages and nationalities nevertheless learning to live in harmony under the banner of a common faith. Thirdly, it is to provide an anchorage for faith in the system, tempering growing individualism in society and relativism in intellectual and moral life. In short, it is needed to provide that Catholic ethos which contributes so much to the common good.

Catholic schools promote social cohesion, and this should not surprise: the fundamental ethos of care for others and service to the common good on which social cohesion depends is precisely the same core value promoted in Catholic education. ■

Why is the Pope beatifying John Henry Newman?

While here, Pope Benedict will honour John Henry Newman, one of the most distinguished English Catholics of the 19th century, by declaring him "Blessed".

This is known as beatification, and is just one step short of declaring him a saint.

At a special ceremony at Coventry Airport - chosen to accommodate the thousands expected – the Pope will actually have to break one of his own rules... because he doesn't normally perform beatification ceremonies at all.

While saints are seen as examples of Christian living for the entire Church, those who are beatified are seen as role models for a particular place or country. But Cardinal Newman is very special to Pope Benedict, hence relaxing the normal practice to honour a great man.

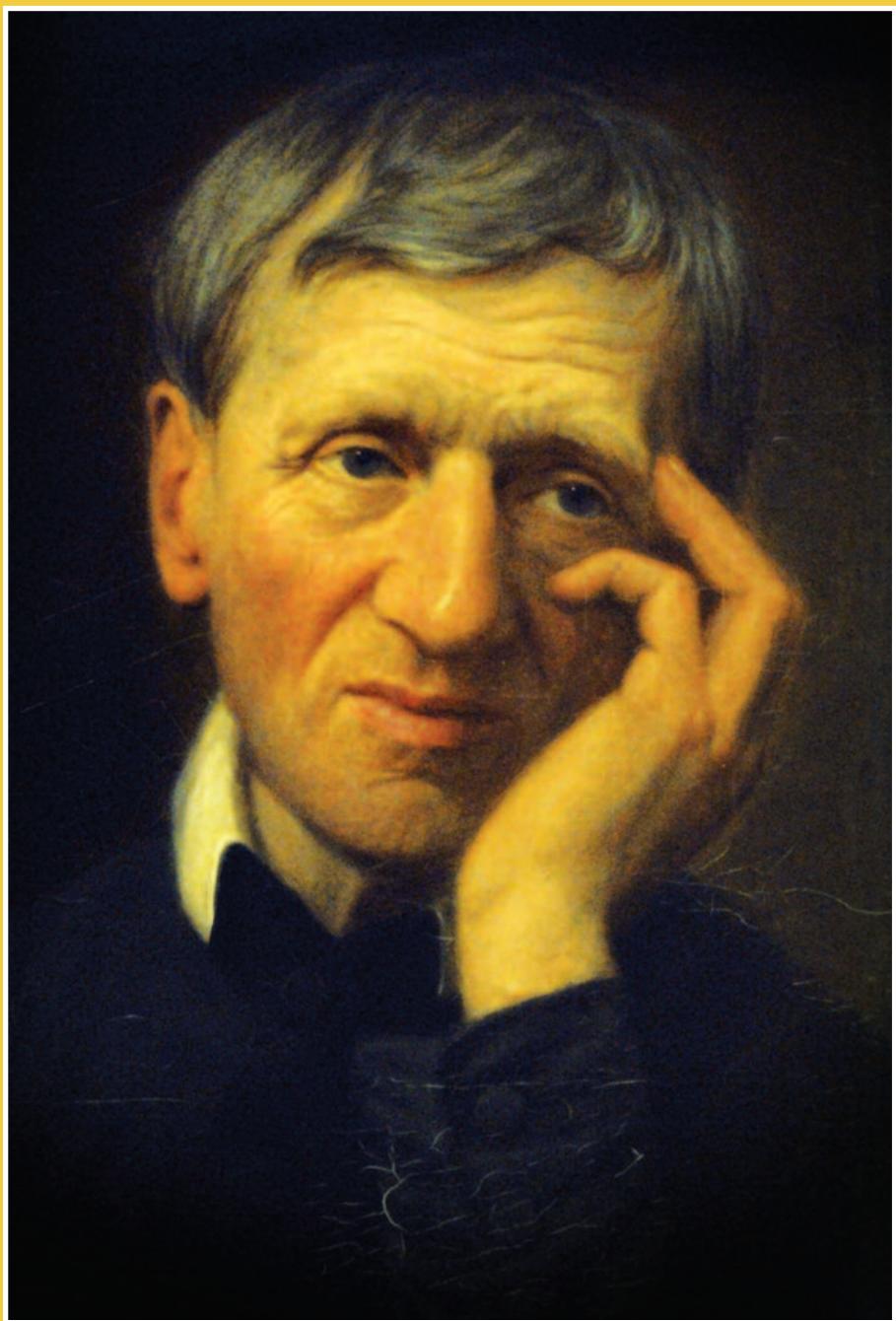
What might make Newman special for us?

He was born in 1801 and died in 1890. That long life was marked by deep faith and packed with surprises. He was recognized as brilliant when he went up to Oxford, but overwork meant that he only managed to get a very poor undergraduate degree. Nevertheless, he sat for an Oriel Fellowship soon afterwards and was elected. At that time Oriel was regarded as intellectually the most outstanding college in the University. Newman, shy and reserved, blossomed in its atmosphere. However, as a tutor at Oriel, he believed that his responsibilities went beyond teaching, the imparting of knowledge; he saw his role as moral and pastoral as well. This view was then judged to be so radical that soon no more pupils were allotted to him. He was thought to be a bad influence. And one ironical consequence of that loss of pupils meant that some years later, when the Oxford Movement began, he had time available to devote himself to it wholeheartedly. This Movement, which blossomed into what is now called Anglo-Catholicism throughout the Anglican Communion, sought to reconnect the Church of England to its Catholic roots which for centuries had been neglected.

At the start Newman was its most prominent exponent, but after a while he found himself drawn by his own arguments and a series of events to doubt the very position for which he was so eloquent an advocate. In 1845, twenty years after his ordination as an Anglican priest and after lengthy anguished study and reflection, he was received into the Catholic Church. Throughout this time, these changes were driven by a search for truth. As a young man in a moment of depression while abroad, he penned his most famous poem which began: "Lead, kindly Light, amid th'encircling gloom, lead Thou me on."

That decision in 1845 was costly. It cut him off from many of his friends for years, but he described it later as being like "coming into port after a rough sea". He joined the order of priests called Oratorians, was ordained as a Catholic priest, and established the Congregation of the Oratory in England. Nevertheless his troubles were not at an end. In old age in 1879 he was astonished to be made a Cardinal, but his Catholic life had been filled with trials and controversies.

The small, marginal community that was the Catholic Church in England at that time did not know what to do with the distinguished scholar who had joined them. He was invited to undertake a variety of projects, for example, to found a Catholic University in Dublin, to oversee a new translation of the Bible, and to edit a prestigious, but controversial periodical,



The Rambler. These projects appealed to him because they involved education in what he called the “large sense of the word”, what we today might call culture. While others were preoccupied with making converts, Newman wanted English Catholics to be better educated because he believed the Church needed to be prepared for converts, as well as converts prepared for the Church. But his efforts were consistently undermined. He was never given the support that was necessary.

“Catholicism is a deep matter - you can not take it up in a teacup” - The Venerable John Henry Newman

As the years went by, he came to feel frustrated and overwhelmed by disappointment. There is a poignant entry in his Journal for January 1863 in which he writes that since he has been a Catholic, “I seem to myself to have had nothing but failure, personally”. His trials, including conflict within the Church, had worn him down. And his experience has a lesson for us. It is easy to identify the cross with dramatic events, like sickness, disability, or bereavement. But suffering can take many forms. There were dramatic events indeed in Newman’s life, but he is also an example of someone who bore faithfully over long years a cross carved out of constant disappointment. It is the kind of cross many people have to bear.

And there were controversies. First, there was his exchange with Charles Kingsley, the Anglican clergyman, Cambridge professor, and novelist. Kingsley had referred to Newman in passing as “indifferent to the truth”. This charge stirred Newman to respond and led to his writing his *Apologia pro Vita Sua*, his account of his Catholic conversion, vindicating his behaviour. People might not agree with what he had done, he was saying, but at least they could see that he had acted honestly. The book proved to be a turning-point. There were old friends who, when they realized the affection he still had for them, made contact with him again.

And there were other quarrels. One old friend, whose friendship had never wavered, was Edward Pusey. They clashed amicably over doctrine and devotion concerning the Blessed Virgin Mary, while later Newman was involved in a dispute with William Gladstone about Papal Infallibility and the Vatican Council Decrees. These controversies are interesting not only in themselves, but also for the tone Newman adopted. At the height of his influence as an Anglican, Newman had argued that the Church of England was a middle way, a *via media*, between Protestant and Catholic claims. He came in time to abandon that position, but what he did not abandon was the moderation that inspired it. As a Catholic too in controversy, he looked for a moderate way. While he was arguing against Pusey and Gladstone, on the one hand, he was also seeking, on the other, to temper the extravagance of more extreme Catholics like Frederick Faber and W G Ward. It is a useful lesson for dialogue today.

There are many more lessons to be learnt from Newman, besides his search for truth, his commitment to education, his fidelity throughout long dark years, and his moderation in debate. But fundamental to everything, the fruit of his faith in God, was his care for people, his pastoral instinct, and his refusal to pursue arguments without touching hearts. He was at heart a pastoral priest, indeed a parish priest for over 30 years. That is the man Pope Benedict will beatify. He still has much to teach us. ■

How do I connect with God?

There are so many books on “mind, body and spirit” that bookshops devote whole sections to them.

A lot of society is secular nowadays and yet there is still a raging thirst for trying to understand the ultimate meaning of our lives.

Many people who do not call themselves religious are nonetheless aware of a spiritual depth to life. This interest in spirituality seems to indicate a wish to get in touch with what is beyond ourselves, something to do with truth, beauty and love.

This instinctive search for meaning is something the Catholic Church understands and shares. The Church sees the fulfilment of these deepest human needs in the reality of God.

St Augustine wrote: "You have made us for yourself, O Lord, and our heart is restless until it rests in you."

The gift of faith illuminates this restless search, but does not end it. God is a mystery beyond our understanding.

Christians believe that not only do we long for God, but that God longs for us, and seeks us out. He has always been there for us, even when we didn't know it.

This is the strangest discovery of all. God is not just a remote entity, who set things in motion and then withdrew forever. God's love is continuously creative, the source of all life and all goodness. We can even speak of him as a Person, though not like any person we have ever met.

God loves us into being, and so the very fact that we exist is evidence of God's unfailing love. This divine love also gives us space to be ourselves. All our loving is a tiny share in this divine love. So we welcome God into our lives by loving others in a way which is intimate, that delights in their existence, but that do not gobble them up but gives them space to breathe.

But if God's love for us is perfect, ours for him and for each other is certainly far from it. Our relationships with other people are often soured by greed, selfishness and prejudice. The story of the fall of Adam and Eve explores that failure. It is not a literal historical account. It explores a deeper truth, of how the relationships of human beings to God and to each other are somehow skewed and distorted.

In the Old Testament, the hope for a healing of that relationship with God was expressed as the desire to see God's face: "Let your face shine on us and we shall be saved." Salvation was much more than liberation from failure and evil. It was God's smile, taking pleasure in our existence. In the fullness of time God's delight became flesh and blood in the face of Jesus Christ, who took pleasure in everyone, even in prostitutes and sinners, and welcomed them to his table to feast with him.

Such an unconditional love can be frightening and disturbing. Most of us would rather feel

Jesus himself was asked by his disciples how to connect with God. He answered by suggesting a simple prayer, known ever since as the Lord's Prayer.



Pope Benedict XVI celebrates Mass at the Fifth World Meeting of Families in Valencia, Spain, July 2006. The pope consecrated the wine with what tradition says is the cup Jesus used during the Last Supper. This cup, known as the Holy Grail, has been kept in the cathedral in Valencia since 1437.

that we merit love because of our achievements, our moral goodness, our keeping the rules. Here was a disturbing love which was beyond our imagination and our earning. And so Jesus was rejected, and God's living love was nailed to a cross.

On the night before he died, Jesus embraced everything that disconnects us from God and each other: hatred, cowardice, greed, misunderstanding, suffering and even death. He accepted all of that at the Last Supper, when he gave himself to the very disciples who would deny him and run away. On the cross he took upon himself all our rejection of God, our disloyalty to each other, and then on the first Easter Sunday the victory over hatred and division was won.

Easter is a spring festival, which celebrates God's inexhaustible creativity which no failure of ours can defeat. The Holy Spirit, the power of God seen in creation and in Christ's resurrection, was called by a 12th century abbess, Hildegard of Bingen, the 'greenness of God.' We believe that whatever we may have done to distance ourselves from God or to destroy our relationships with each other, is overcome.

In Jesus Christ we discovered that God does not just love us; God is love, the eternal, equal love of the Father and the Son which is the Holy Spirit, a Trinity of persons in one undivided God. This is a love without domination or manipulation, but of pure mutual gift. The Trinity is a mystery beyond our understanding, but it is the mystery which explains everything. This is our home, the love for which we long and for which we are made, and which we shall enjoy forever.

Jesus himself was asked by his disciples how to connect with God. He answered by suggesting a simple prayer, known ever since as the Lord's Prayer. It talks of failing and forgiveness, or God's concern for our daily needs, and above all of doing God's will - "Thy will be done." That means understanding and carrying out our duty to ourselves, to our neighbour (which includes the stranger in our midst) and to God. In fact there is an even deeper truth here. Jesus was himself God's own answer to the question "How do we connect with God?" For he is God's presence on earth, among us even today. In the words of Scripture "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son..." (John 3:16). He is closer to us than our own souls, and always instantly available to us through prayer. Christians are invited to develop an ever-closer relationship with him, a relationship of friendship and love.

Jesus Christ is present among us in the poor and vulnerable, which is why works of charity and love for the relief of suffering have always been one of the Catholic Church's chief priorities. He explained this to his disciples by saying that when acts of mercy and kindness

are performed, "as long as you did it to one of these my least brethren, you did it to me." (Matthew 25:40)

He is present in his Church, which is why St Paul actually called the Church the Body of Christ. He is present whenever his followers come together to remember him, for he said: "For where there are two or three gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them." (Matthew 18:20) He is active in the Church particularly through the sacraments. He is present in a special way whenever the Eucharist - otherwise called the Mass - is celebrated. This is a reenactment of the Last Supper, at which Jesus blessed the bread and declared "This is my body": and the wine, which became his blood, soon to be sacrificed for the forgiveness of sins. Catholics believe he meant what he said, and that while appearances remain the same, a real change takes place. The bread and wine become the real presence of Christ truly and sacramentally his body and blood.

"You have made us for yourself, O Lord, and our heart is restless until it rests in you" - St Augustine

So how can we deepen this relationship with God: Father, Son and Holy Spirit? To start with, by loving our family, friends and ultimately our enemies too. We are apprentices of a love which is purified of all contempt or superiority, so that it is an ever deeper sharing in the love that is the Trinity.

Then, in learning to be grateful: for our own existence, for our bodies which we received from our parents, for those whom we love, and for the whole of creation. St Basil of Caesarea wrote in the fourth century, "I want to awake in you a deep admiration for creation, until you, in every place contemplating plants and flowers, are overcome with remembrance of the Creator." Our care of the earth is an expression of gratitude to the Creator.

Thirdly, by consciously and deliberately opening our hearts to God each day, in prayer. We speak with God our words of praise and thanksgiving; we ask for our needs and for those of the whole world; but above all we listen to the quiet voice of God in the stillness of our innermost being. In the community of the Church we offer the perfect prayer of the Mass, we celebrate the other Sacraments, and we are encouraged and guided on our shared journey to God. On that journey the leadership of the Successor of Peter is of crucial importance and so it is with deep appreciation that we welcome Pope Benedict to the United Kingdom. ■

Prayer for the Papal Visit to Britain: 16th – 19th September 2010

God of truth and love,
your Son, Jesus Christ, stands as the light
to all who seek you with a sincere heart.
As we strive with your grace
to be faithful in word and deed,
may we reflect the kindly light of Christ
and offer a witness of hope and peace to all.
We pray for Pope Benedict
and look forward with joy
to his forthcoming visit to our countries.
May he be a witness to the unity and hope
which is your will for all people.
We make our prayer through Christ our Lord.
Amen.

Our Lady, Mother of the Church — pray for us.
St Andrew — pray for us.
St George — pray for us.
St David — pray for us.

So what is the Catholic Church for?

When Jesus first began to teach, he did not travel alone. He called a number of people to become his disciples and followers. In choosing them as his friends, he also asked them to accept his other friends and together to form a community, a group. After his death and resurrection, the first group of Christians met together, as we read in the Acts of the Apostles, (2:42) "They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and to the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer."

So from the earliest times it was clear that no one could be a Christian alone. Christians came together (the word "church" means gathering) to express and deepen their faith, and to be renewed for the journey of following Jesus in their lives, and to serve those in need.

The early churches founded by the apostles saw themselves both as distinct communities and as gathered together as part of one larger whole, with a common life and a common mission. The fundamental mission of Jesus Christ, sent by the Father, was to bring the world back to God its creator, to be the sign and instrument of the healing or redemption of humanity. This is the mission that the Crucified and Risen Christ in turn gave to the Church – that is, to the communities of Christians down the ages gathered together in his name, inspired and guided by the Holy Spirit. St Paul describes the Church as the body of Christ in the world - an effective sign of the unity between God and humanity achieved once and for all through the death and resurrection of Christ. The unity of the Church - and the word Catholic means universal – derives from this mission given to the whole Church. The Church does not exist for its own sake, but for the sake of the world.

In our society today when people think of "the Church" they tend to associate it immediately with buildings, or history, or the structures of the church – popes, bishops, priests and religious. All these are secondary to the fundamental character of the Church, which is the living redemptive presence of the risen Lord in the communities who gather in his name. It is not possible to understand what the Catholic Church is without looking at it in this way. You cannot see the beauty of a stained glass window from outside on the street. You have to enter the Church, where the community gathers, to appreciate the beauty of the window when the light shines in. The Catholic Church at its heart is not a building, or a structure, or an institution. It is a body – in Christ a mystical body – a community of believers joined with those who have lived and died in the faith, united through space and time in a calling to worship God and to love deeply, at the service of the whole human family.

At the centre of this faith shared by Catholics is the gathering around the Eucharist. Following the actions and instruction of Jesus on the night before he died, his followers meet to pray and, by the action of the Holy Spirit through the priest at Mass, to receive new life: the body and blood of the crucified and risen lord. This central act of the Church is a primary source of renewal and reconciliation, a special privileged way in which the life of God continually enters and renews the community, and prepares it for its mission in the world.

As the early Church grew disputes arose almost immediately, and it was necessary to find ways ensuring that the churches – the body of Christ – remained united in faith. Jesus had chosen the apostles, on whom the Holy Spirit descended at Pentecost, as the leaders of his body the Church. The passing on of that leadership - the apostolic succession - by the laying on of hands was the way in which the continuity of identity, and the service of leadership for the sake of the community, was carried out. The Bishop of Rome, the leader of the church

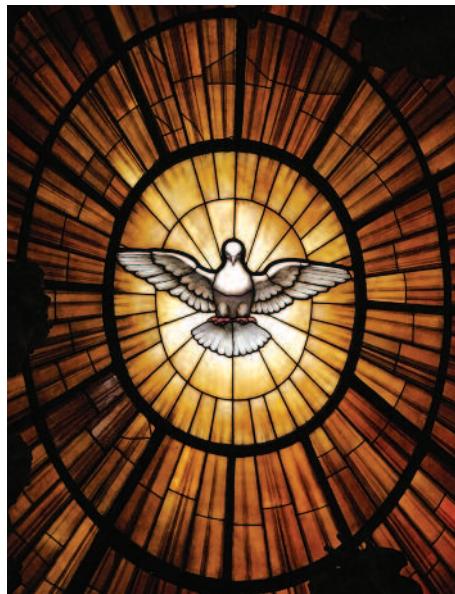
community, was the direct successor of St Peter, the leader of the first apostles. Throughout its history the fundamental role of the Pope, the traditional name given to the Bishop of Rome, has been to act as a sign of the unity of the Church. The bishop of each diocese - the territorial 'unit' within the Church - is likewise a sign of its unity. Pope and bishops together, then, serve the unity and mission of the Church.

As the Bishop of Rome, in that Church uniquely founded on the preaching and martyrdom of the Apostles Peter and Paul, Pope Benedict is the direct successor of that City's first Bishop, Simon Peter.

Catholics believe that the gift of the Holy Spirit, given first to the whole Church and in a particular way to the apostles and those who succeed them, will ensure that the truth of the revelation of God in Jesus Christ is faithfully passed on, and that the living tradition of the Church develops its understanding of this central mystery in fidelity to the truth. Guided by the revelation of God in Jesus, the community of the Church offers a sure guide towards living in truth, knowing also that words will always be inadequate to the reality we seek to understand and to live by.

Because it is always made up of people, and because people are always prone to failure and to sin, the Church through history is also marred and flawed. It is called to holiness, and preaches the love of God for humanity, but the failures of some in the Church are often painfully apparent, and a cause of much suffering. At its heart, however, the Church does not depend on the goodness of people. Its foundation is the goodness of God, and the extraordinary and life-enhancing presence of God in our lives who offers forgiveness and reconciliation. It is the possibility of human redemption and transformation that is the heart of the Church, and the signs of its holiness.

From a tiny community of faithful followers 2,000 years ago, the communities of faith quickly spread. As a human institution at times it has been powerful; at other times persecuted. Sometimes the power has done more harm to its fundamental nature than the persecution. Through all this the Catholic Church has proved extraordinarily resilient, one of the great driving forces behind human civilisation and human culture. Today the Catholic Church is genuinely universal – present in most countries of the world with some 1.2 billion members, a fifth of the world's population. The Church's witness is manifest in these worshipping communities and also through charitable endeavours, in schools, hospitals and the lives of faithful service often unsung which so many good people live. It is especially these lives of quiet holiness, of sacrifice, sometimes in the face of persecution, which nourish and sustain the Church in each generation, and show the Church as what it is called to be - the body of Christ in the world. ■



*Light shines through the Holy Spirit window in
St Peter's Basilica at the Vatican.*



To catch up with what's happening on the Papal Visit, all the latest developments and to follow the Pope through out his visit from September 16-19 go to www.thepapalvisit.org.uk

When Pope Benedict XVI visits, he will be carrying out both state and pastoral engagements with Catholics, fellow Christians and people of other religions.

The State will be paying for the costs associated with the state aspects of the visit.

The Church will be paying for the costs associated with the pastoral aspects of the visit. These costs are very substantial - £7m.

Please support the visit if you can with your prayers and also your financial support. You can donate online at www.thepapalvisit.org.uk

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