

CATHOLIC BISHOPS' CONFERENCE OF ENGLAND AND WALES  
Committee for Catholic Jewish Relations

# *Holocaust Memorial Day*

27<sup>th</sup> January 2008

**Imagine...**  
remember reflect react



A group of Sisters of Sion remember those Jews who lost their lives at Sobibor,

a death camp in Poland.

## **Imagine....**

On Holocaust Memorial Day this year we are invited to imagine what life was like for certain groups of people under the Nazi regime. Words which come to mind include oppression, cruelty, discrimination, concentration camps, Auschwitz. Among those who experienced this harsh regime were Poles, Slavs, Gypsies, homosexuals and political activists. Jews from all over the European continent were particularly targeted. Altogether 6 million Jews lost their lives.

## **To help you to imagine....**

- Invite a survivor of the Nazi regime to speak to your group, parish community or school
- Organise a visit to Poland to see some of the camps firsthand
- Find books in your local library or bookshop on the Shoah (Holocaust)
- Look out for films and documentaries on TV

## **Remember.....**

If we don't remember the atrocities of the Shoah they are likely to happen again. As Primo Levi (an Italian Jewish survivor) said, "It happened, therefore it can happen again". Memory is a key factor in ensuring a society which is more just, inclusive and accepting of difference.

## **How you can remember**

- Visit an exhibition or museum dedicated to the Shoah eg Beth Shalom in Laxton, Nottinghamshire; the Imperial War Museum in London
- Invest in some resources for your college, school, parish or community eg posters, cd roms, literature
- Include a symbol eg a special candle to be lit or a prayer of remembrance in the liturgy in your parish, school or community.

## Reflect....

This year we are invited to spend some time reflecting on the Shoah. What was the political ideology of the Nazi regime and how did it gain a foothold? Was there any opposition to it? At the time of the Shoah the Christian view of Judaism and the Jewish people was clearly negative and judgmental. The Church now teaches that God continues to be faithful to the covenant he made with the people of Israel; Judaism continues to have significance today.

## To help you reflect....

- Read some of the statements of Pope John Paul II and Benedict XVI on Jews and Judaism
- Get to know the Vatican documents in *Documents of the Holy See* (CTS)
- Visit the web-sites listed overleaf

## React....

This year's theme leads to action. There is still much ignorance about the Shoah and a residue of negativity about Judaism and the Jewish people. Similar negative attitudes towards other groups of people can easily take root. Indeed many are still suffering under oppressive regimes today.

## Suggestions for action:

- Provide opportunities for teaching and learning about the Holocaust
- Develop a positive attitude towards Jews and Judaism
- Foster attitudes of inclusivity and acceptance in your parish, community, college and school
- Print out the Statement of Commitment from the HMD website. Encourage your parish, community or group to sign it

# Resources

## **The Vatican Documents on Catholic-Jewish Relations**

Documents from the Holy See  
Catholic Truth Society, London  
Website: [www.icrelations.net](http://www.icrelations.net)

## **For Holocaust Memorial Day Pack (including material from CTBI)**

The Holocaust Memorial Day Trust  
PO Box 49743, London, WC1H 9WU  
Tel: 0845 838 1883  
Email: [enquiries@hmd.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@hmd.org.uk)  
Website: [www.hmd.org.uk](http://www.hmd.org.uk)

## **For outreach to schools, resource materials, visits to Auschwitz:**

Holocaust Educational Trust  
BCM Box 7892, London WC1N 3XX  
Tel: 020 7222 6822  
Email: [info@het.org.uk](mailto:info@het.org.uk)  
Website: [www.het.org.uk](http://www.het.org.uk)

## **For educational material and visits:**

Beth Shalom Holocaust Centre  
Laxton, Newark, Notts NG22 0PA  
Tel: 01623 836627  
Website: [www.bethshalom.com](http://www.bethshalom.com)

The Imperial War Museum,  
Lambeth Road  
London, SE1 6HZ  
Tel: 020 74165320  
Website: [www.iwm.org.uk](http://www.iwm.org.uk)

## **For general information:**

The Council of Christians and Jews  
1<sup>st</sup> Floor Camelford House  
87-89 Albert Embankment, London SE1 7TP  
Tel: 020 7820 0090  
Email: [cjrelations@ccj.org.uk](mailto:cjrelations@ccj.org.uk)  
Website: [www.ccj.org.uk](http://www.ccj.org.uk)

## **For resources on racial justice and ethnic minorities:**

Catholic Association for Racial Justice  
9 Henry Road, London N4 2LH  
Tel: 020 8802 8080  
Email: [info@carj.org.uk](mailto:info@carj.org.uk)  
Website: [www.carj.org.uk](http://www.carj.org.uk)

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