



& PAPAL VISIT 2010

PARISH RESOURCES

Pope Benedict XVI will visit Britain 16 - 19 September 2010.

“Encourage your people to pray that it will be a time of grace for the whole Catholic community...

Assure them that the Pope constantly remembers them in his prayers and holds them in his heart.”

From addresses by Pope Benedict to the Bishops of England & Wales and Scotland



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Supporting Catholic parishes in celebration and witness

Pope Benedict XVI's visit to the UK, at the invitation of Her Majesty's government, will receive extensive media attention and it will give the Catholic community an opportunity to experience their Catholic identity in a particular way. This, after all, is the one person who binds the Catholic community together throughout the world.

The visit will also be an opportunity for everyone in society to reflect on what Pope Benedict has to say to all of us irrespective of belief, and the need to focus on the common good, a dimension of society that has perhaps been partially lost in the recent past. We have become a selfish society in many ways, and the message of the Pope will be a reminder of where true happiness is to be found.

Many of our parishes are experiencing upheaval and anxiety, and the visit of Pope Benedict is a chance to renew ourselves as parish communities. Because you will be able to watch the visit in full on the official website www.thepapalvisit.org.uk, and the principal celebrations televised live, this will be an invitation to parishes to come together and celebrate those moments, and to consider whether

they might also offer the chance to celebrate them ecumenically.

This booklet is offered as a help to preparations for local initiatives; they don't have to be on a great scale, but in the same way that the visit of Pope John Paul II stayed in the mind of those who experienced it, there are things that can be done on a smaller, local scale that can make the visit in September a really memorable moment of renewal. The theme of the visit is the phrase 'Heart speaks unto heart', and the gift that the Catholic community can offer the rest of our society today is this invitation to engage again in a dialogue of love and care for one another.

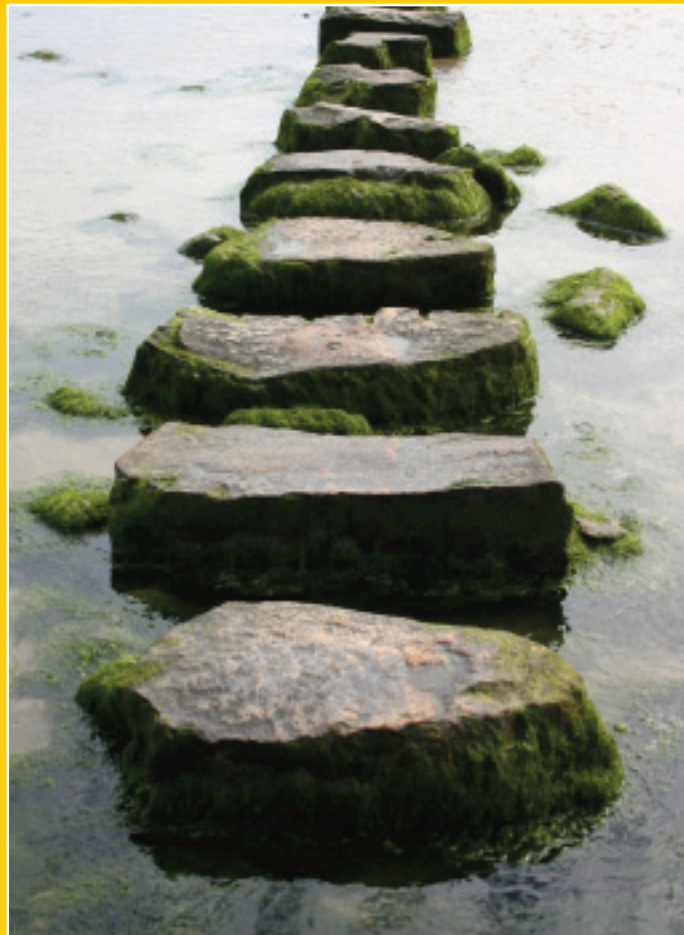
Bishop Kieran Conry

(Diocese of Arundel and Brighton), Chair of the Department for Evangelisation and Catechesis

PARISH RESOURCES

SEVEN PATHWAYS

- 1 PRAYER
- 2 FORMATION
- 3 PROMOTION
- 4 LOCAL EVENTS
- 5 JOURNEY OF FAITH WITNESS
- 6 SERVICE
- 7 DAILY LIFE



The resources mentioned in this booklet are available for download on the Papal Visit website: www.thepapalvisit.co.uk

As it becomes available, information on the Pope's itinerary is posted on the Papal Visit website.



*Most Rev
Vincent Nichols,
Archbishop of
Westminster*

The invitation to take part in this visit is extended to everyone without exception. It is not simply an invitation for the Holy Father to come and visit the Catholics of this country - that invitation would have come from the Catholic Church - it is an invitation to the people of this country to meet with Pope Benedict, to listen to his witness, to, as it were, relate to him...
Pope Benedict is a herald of the Gospel of Jesus Christ and the core message that Christ brings is the message of God's gift of himself to us and that is a gift of love, truth, compassion and forgiveness. Right at the heart of everything that the Pope wants to say will be this message of the reality of God's love touching our lives, opening everything that is best in us and helping us then to work together for the genuine integral good of every human being.

PARISH RESOURCES **SEVEN** PATHWAYS

1 PRAYER

Prayer is the foundation of Christian life and it is something that Pope Benedict has especially invited us to do during these months of preparation.

Official Prayer

Prayer cards are available for parishes. Consider saying this prayer at the end of every Mass.

Holy Hour

The theme of the the visit is *Heart Speaks Unto Heart* and a holy hour has been written with this as its focus. Perhaps diarise offering one hour of prayer before the Blessed Sacrament?

Novena

A novena is a devotion consisting of a prayer repeated on nine successive days, asking to obtain special graces. Cardinal John Henry Newman, who will be beatified during the visit, had great devotion to the Sacred Heart. Consider saying a novena in the nine day countdown to the Pope's arrival.

Additional prayer resources to cover each part of the itinerary are available online.



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2 FORMATION

The Holy Father will speak about many different issues during his stay. In the months before and after his visit the baptised are invited to deepen their knowledge and appreciation of Catholic teaching.

Faith Sharing Groups

Five sessions have been written for use in small parish faith sharing groups. They are designed to help people unpack the meaning of the theme of the Papal Visit. Materials will similarly be available for use after the visit to assist reflection about where to go from here.

Reading

A number of short articles and documents have been written to explain the purpose of the visit and to unpack some of the areas of life that the Pope will speak about. Consider downloading a selection and sharing them with fellow parishioners and people who ask you questions.

Replenishing Parish Materials

Most parishes use a porch area or other space at the back of the church to make available good Catholic reading material. Over the summer perhaps check that this is well-stocked with materials relevant to the Papal Visit. Ensure that there is a mix of materials on display that cater for Sunday mass-goers but also for those who are not Catholic and pay an impromptu visit.

Answers to frequently asked questions related to the visit are available, serving as an accompanying catechetical guide.



PARISH RESOURCES **SEVEN** PATHWAYS

3 PROMOTION

Although the visit will feature in the national media, it is important to promote it at a local level as well.

Papal Flag

Visual signs are often more effective than words. Consider flying a Papal flag during the visit as a sign of support for the Pope but also as a way of witnessing to your Catholic Faith.

Local Newspaper

The local press is an excellent way of communicating to your neighbours and friends. Perhaps approach your local editor and share with him your parish plans for the visit, issuing an invitation of welcome to anyone who would like to take part in parish activities?

Parish Website

Websites provide easy access to information about the visit and your parish. A special web banner has been created for download which would be suitable for publication on parish home pages. It can also be used on the websites and blogs of individuals.

The Papal Visit website is offering: downloadable posters to photocopy and (with permission) put up in shops and public places; social networking opportunities (Facebook, Twitter and Youtube), newsletter inserts, tips for making parish noticeboards attractive and much more.



Mazur/catholicchurch.org.uk

4 LOCAL EVENTS

A small proportion of us will be able to be present with the Pope during his visit. For the majority, there are ways of celebrating locally.

Commissioning

The parishioners who do attend a main event will do so as parish representatives. Perhaps pencil in a prayer and commissioning time during the Sunday Mass or on a weekday preceding the Pope's arrival? This will provide an opportunity for parish representatives to be sent to a Papal event with the love and prayer intentions of the whole parish. Attendees could in turn be invited to share their experiences (testimony) and photographs with parishioners the following Sunday.

Vigil Gathering

On the night of the 18th September consider scheduling Saturday evening Mass earlier and gathering with other local Christians (e.g. Churches Together Groups) in a hall or school to follow the Prayer Vigil together. A format for such an evening and instructions about how to set up your own 'big screen link up' are available online.

Mass on 19th September

Consider rescheduling the times of your Sunday Masses once the final Papal itinerary is known.

Welcome Sunday

You might consider hosting a special invitation and welcome day the Sunday after the Papal weekend. Each parishioner could be invited to bring a neighbour or friend with them to Mass. There would need to be a team of welcomers in place and refreshments made available afterwards.

Online: links to RCIA materials to assist catering for faith enquirers and information about Home Mission Sunday (19th September 2010).

PARISH RESOURCES **SEVEN** PATHWAYS

5 JOURNEY OF FAITH WITNESS

In Pope Paul VI's, *Evangelii Nuntiandi* (14) we read: "Evangelising is in fact the grace and vocation proper to the Church, her deepest identity. She exists in order to evangelise, that is to say, in order to preach and teach, to be the channel of the gift of grace, to reconcile sinners with God, and to perpetuate Christ's sacrifice in the Mass." Whilst there are many different ways in which we can share our faith, witnessing through the spoken word is one of them (1 Peter 3: 15).

Bishop Testimonies

Over the summer a number of the bishops will share on video a moment when the Lord spoke to them heart-to-heart. Do watch these stories for inspiration and encouragement. Perhaps consider forwarding links to these testimonies to others?

How to share your story?

A PowerPoint and guidelines sheet have been created to encourage all the baptised to identify a moment when God spoke to them. The resource offers questions to help people articulate something of their journey of faith. These can be used in groups or by individuals. The aim is to equip the baptised to share something about their faith story as opportunities arise before, during and after the Pope's visit.

Parish Patron Saint

The stories of saints are wonderful tools of evangelisation, but how well do you and others know them? Perhaps make available summary materials about your parish patron in the newsletter, website, noticeboard, local newspaper and online?

Stories of British saints will be available on the Papal Visit website.



6 SERVICE

Faith without works of charity is empty. We are called as Christians to make the love of Christ manifest through our actions.

Supporting An Existing Project

Many areas have a volunteer soup kitchen team. Perhaps members of the parish could be invited to become volunteers as a fruit of the Papal Visit?

Free Community Event

Working in consultation with local agencies, you may decide to put on a free party for a group of people in your area - the elderly, mums and toddlers or young people.

Commemorative Gesture

To mark the visit of the Pope you might decide to make a gift to your local community. This could take the form of sponsoring the creation of a garden area or making a donation of books to a local school or charity.

Additional ideas are: volunteering to do bag packing at the local supermarket, offering free parking to shoppers if your parish is situated close to amenities and linking up with an overseas development project: See, for example, www.cafod.org.uk and www.missio.org.uk. A space will be provided online for you to register and share which act of service you've decided to do so as to inspire other parishes to do the same.



PARISH RESOURCES **SEVEN** PATHWAYS

7 DAILY LIFE

Most people only spend time in their parish church on a Sunday morning. There are so many ways from Monday - Saturday that we can share our faith.

Relationships

There's a well-known phrase, "Charity begins at home" and there is truth in this. Perhaps during the visit we can look again at our relationships with family and friends. Is there anyone needing our kindness and love who we may have been neglecting? Could we be more open to opportunities for reconciliation?

Valuing Family Rituals

Family rituals strengthen relationships, build resilience, reinforce values and sustain family identity. They are also an integral part of a family's spirituality. Invite parish families to think about their rituals and how they might mark at home the Pope's visit. Families could gather to watch the major celebrations on TV together or keep a vigil candle lit in a window of their home for the length of the Pope's visit. For materials to support family spirituality see: www.homeisaholyplace.org.uk



Fellowship

If you know other Christians who work alongside you, invite them to pray with you at a convenient moment in the working day. In this way fellowship will be fostered and the needs of your working environment and colleagues will be brought to God in prayer.

Social Justice

It is important to be informed about the causes of poverty and suffering. Perhaps mark the Holy Father's visit by getting involved in a campaign or project? Many parishes, for example, have active Justice and Peace Groups: See, for example, www.justice-and-peace.org.uk/index.html

Social Action

Catholics are called to give practical expression to their faith. If you'd like to explore sharing your time and talents, Caritas Social Action Network (www.caritas-socialaction.org.uk), for example, is an umbrella organisation of charities with a Catholic ethos, providing professional social care within the UK. The members of the Network work on projects with vulnerable and marginalised people throughout the country.

Pause for Reflection

In what ways can our parish respond to the opportunities that the Papal Visit presents?

How can I respond in my daily life?



GUIDELINES FOR PARISH EVENT ORGANISERS

Things to consider in service of Home Mission

It is hoped that every parish in England and Wales will host some kind of event to mark this historic and missionary occasion. Some considerations when preparing for an event might be:

1 Does what you propose to do implicitly and explicitly proclaim the Gospel message?

(See: *Evangelii Nuntiandi* 25 - 39) An evening of hospitality, for example, should at some point include a prayer or some other respectful presentation of the reason for the gathering. Attendees should feel welcome and fully included, but also know that this is a Christian celebration.

2 “Put out into the deep” (Luke 5: 4) and invite people who are not members of the parish to come to the event.

Whatever event you're organising, consider who outside of the parish you can personally invite to come along; one-to-one invitations are especially important and effective. Advertising in public places can also bear fruit such as, with permission, putting up a poster or flier in a local newsagent, supermarket or post office. Placing an advert in a local newspaper can also help to attract people to 'come and see'. Contact with your local Churches Together (ecumenical) group is recommended.

3 Is the proposed music for the gathering easy for people to pick up?

Organisers should carefully consider if the hymns are easy for visitors to learn. If some of those gathered feel unable to join in it could have the effect of making them feel excluded.

4 Could everyone in attendance understand the language being used during the event (this includes what is written in possible service booklets)?

As a Church we use a lot of words that might not be understandable to those who are not Catholics. If 'Catholic words' are used, try to insert a brief explanation next to them in brackets. A Catholic glossary can be found on:

www.thepapalvisit.org.uk

5 Will clear direction be offered during the proposed gathering?

If parish visitors are participating in, or watching an event, they need to be clearly directed when to sit, stand and sing, for example.

6 How do your proposed decorations and signs and symbols signpost people to God?

People learn in three ways: visually, orally and through doing an action (kinesthetic). Visuals are very important. For some, beauty is the main way through which they connect with God. Consider carefully therefore the suitability of your proposed decorations and, if necessary, be ready to explain them; a candle, for example, can be described as a visual reminder of God's living presence and love amongst us. The gathering area should display a crucifix.

7 Have you asked a team of people to serve as welcomers?

It is very important to ensure that a team of people are in place to provide a warm welcome at the entrance to the event and to accompany people during the programme.

8 Next steps

The hope is that the event offered will foster the forming of relationships with new friends and that it may also encourage people to take a step of faith. Event organisers therefore need to factor into their planning advertising what attendees can do next, be that visiting a website, or attending a parish group or follow up event. Please advertise prominently the Catholic Enquiry Office at the event (see the back page of this booklet).

www.beingcatholic.org

BeingCatholic.org has been designed to help adult Catholics in Scotland find information about opportunities to grow in faith. The Bishops' Conference of England and Wales is working in partnership with this team, who are part of the Scottish Catholic Bishops' Conference, to resource the Papal Visit 2010.

MORE MATERIALS

Catholic Bishops' Conference Of England And Wales

Papal Website: www.thepapalvisit.org.uk

This website has been especially created to promote, support and provide information about the Holy Father's visit. The main section areas include: Get Involved, Pope Benedict XVI, 2010 Visit, Cardinal Newman, The Catholic Faith, News and Media, Donate, Links and much more.



Home Mission Desk

This booklet has been written by the Home Mission Desk team as a project of the Department for Evangelisation and Catechesis which is part of the Catholic Bishops' Conference of England and Wales.

The Desk exists to serve as a point of reference for evangelisation in dioceses, movements and organisations within the Catholic Church and is currently working with a wide range of partners to resource the Papal Visit 2010. The staff also works alongside the Bishops' Conference media team to respond to programme makers and journalists enquiring about the Catholic Faith.

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Catholic Enquiry Office (CEO)

A free service for faith enquirers is offered by the CEO and is managed by the Catholic Communications Network. The Office exists to: stimulate interest in Catholic life and beliefs; to promote a better understanding of the Catholic Church; to respond to enquirers. Every enquiry is dealt with in the strictest confidence with the aim of signposting enquirers to diocesan and parish contacts. Email: questions@life4seekers.co.uk Website: www.life4seekers.co.uk

Home Mission Sunday, 19th September 2010

Home Mission Sunday is a day of prayer for the spread of the Gospel in England and Wales. This year it coincides with the Pope's visit which is why this booklet is being sent out now. Plans are also in place to resource parishes after the Papal Visit in recognition of the fact that the Holy Father's coming marks the start of something new in the mission of the Church in the UK. More information about the Sunday and resources for use after the Visit will follow closer to September.



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