

**ARCHBISHOP'S HOUSE
WESTMINSTER
LONDON SW1P 1QJ**

19 March 2009

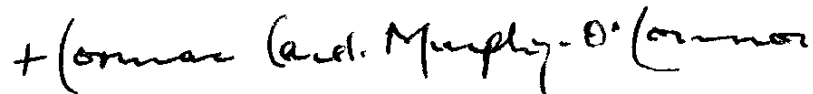
The Editor
The Times
1 Pennington Street
London E98 1TT

Sir,

I was appalled at the tasteless cartoon depicting Pope Benedict XVI in yesterday's Times (18 March). No newspaper should show such disrespect to a person who is held in high esteem by a large proportion of Christians in the world. To pillory the Pope in this way is totally unacceptable.

As to what Pope Benedict said, it would be wiser for people to look at the issues that he was raising in his remarks. It is certainly true that the wide-spread distribution of condoms can run the risk of greater promiscuity and that the best way to combat the Aids epidemic is by health care, education and fidelity in married life. Even if people do not accept the Church's teaching in this matter, it is a well known fact that the greatest contribution to health care for those living with Aids in Africa is given by the Catholic Church.

Yours faithfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Cormac Card. Murphy-O'Connor". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

Cormac Card. Murphy-O'Connor
Archbishop of Westminster