

Home Mission Briefing



'You are the Christ, the Son of the living God.'

Matthew 16 : 15 - 16, Gospel Reading, Feast of Sts. Peter and Paul

A monthly news roundup for the Catholic community in England and Wales

June 2010

DIOCESE:

Arundel and Brighton's Adult Formation Advisor, David Wills, is offering a course called 'How to survive being a Catholic'. Six evening sessions (& retreat day) which cover the basics of the faith.

E-mail:

david.wills@dabnet.org

INITIATIVE:

Alpha in a Catholic Context provides an opportunity for the Christian faith to be explored in a relaxed manner over ten, thought-provoking weekly sessions. uk.alpha.org/catholics



ENQUIRIES:

Sean contacted the Catholic Enquiry Office to ask: 'Is there a concise and accessible summary of Roman Catholic teaching on human sexuality, particularly a proper sexual expression within marriage?'

(Name changed to protect privacy)

MEDIA:

Word On Fire Catholic Ministries is a nonprofit global media organisation which supports Catholic evangelical preaching, particularly the work of Father Robert Barron. It offers a catalogue of Catholic videos and radio programmes. www.wordonfire.org/Home.aspx



ECUMENISM:

The World Council of Churches (WCC) Commission on World Mission and Evangelism has launched a process aimed at an overhaul of the ecumenical understanding of Christian mission. www.oikoumene.org/who-are-we/organization-structure/consultative-bodies/world-mission-and-evangelism.html

Benedict XVI creates Council for New Evangelisation

Will Be Dedicated to Secularised Christian Countries

To ward off secularisation in nations where the Gospel put down roots centuries ago, Benedict XVI is creating a new pontifical council.

The Pope announced the newest Vatican dicastery at Vespers on the feast of Sts. Peter and Paul on 28th June.

This council -- dedicated to a "renewed evangelisation" -- will be the 12th of the Roman Curia. There are also nine congregations.

'Man of the third millennium also desires an authentic and full life, he has need of truth, of profound liberty, of gratuitous love,' the Holy Father

said before announcing the new organisation. 'Also in the deserts of the secularised world, man's soul thirsts for God, for the living God.'

The Pontiff cited his predecessor, Pope John Paul II, in affirming that the mission Christ entrusted to the Church is still far from completion, and that it requires strong commitment.

'There are regions in the world that still wait for a first evangelisation; others that received it but need more profound work; others still in which the Gospel put down roots a long time ago, giving place to a true Christian tradition, but where in the last centuries -- with complex dynamics -- the process of secularisation has produced a grave crisis of the sense of the Christian faith and of belonging to the Church,' Benedict XVI observed.

And he announced: 'In this perspective, I have decided to create a new organism, in the form of

pontifical council, with the specific task of promoting a renewed evangelisation in countries where the first proclamation of the faith already resounded, and where Churches are present of ancient foundation, but which are going through a progressive secularisation of society and a sort of "eclipse of the sense of God," which constitutes a challenge to find the appropriate means to propose again the perennial truth of the Gospel of Christ.'

The Holy Father did not announce who will be the president of the new dicastery.

<http://www.zenit.org/article-29734?l=english>



Exterior Signs

It's said that you can't judge a book by its cover, but most people will make a judgement about the vitality of your parish community by what they see on the external notice-board. Is yours fit for purpose, for welcome and mission?

Annually thousands of people will walk or drive past your board, but what does it communicate about your community, your values, who you are? If it's battered with paint peeling off or has had the same notices on it for over a year, it's unlikely to appeal to the reader. The Papal Visit 2010 provides parishes with an opportunity to review this part of their welcome and communications strategy.

Reading the parish notice-board is often the first step in someone seeking church membership. It is a primary tool of evangelisation.

Every parish should have an external notice-board. Some general guidelines are:

1. The notice-board should be easily and clearly visible on reaching the usual entrance to the church grounds or car park.
2. It should be of good quality and in sound repair.
3. The lettering should be legible and easy to read. Keep the language used on the board simple.
4. The information displayed should not be cluttered.
5. The notice-board should carry the basic information that an enquirer would need to be able to follow up their contact, especially an invitation to 'come and see'.

Five more points are offered on the Papal Visit website: <http://www.thepapalvisit.org.uk/Get-Involved/Parish-Resources/Promotion>

It may be that in some situations it is necessary to obtain planning consent from the local authority before erecting a new notice-board - contact with the planning department will confirm this. Either way, with the Papal Visit countdown underway, now is perhaps the time to consider reviewing this area of parish outreach.



Clare Ward,
Home Mission Advisor

Archbishop Nichols Welcomes New Council



A statement published on 29th June read: 'I welcome the establishment of the Pontifical Council for the promotion of New Evangelisation focussed on situations in which, even though the Christian Gospel has shaped an entire culture, there is now 'a kind of "eclipse of the sense of God"'.
m.Mazur/Ccn

'This initiative identifies a challenge with which many in the Catholic Church, and many in other Christian communities, are familiar. New vitality, confidence and sensitivity are needed in order to propose afresh the great gift of the Christian faith, which serves our humanity and brings such joy to everyday life. This faith is not a theory, nor an ideology, nor a political agenda. It is knowledge and love of the person of Jesus Christ who, for those who accept him, becomes the Way the Truth and the Life.

'We look forward to cooperating with this new Pontifical Council when it begins its important work.'

+Vincent Nichols, 29 June 2010

(More information about the new Council will be shared by the Home Mission Desk as it becomes available.)

Sion's Jubilee Year



The Feast of the Immaculate Conception marks the beginning of the 25th anniversary year for the Brentwood based Sion Community.

In the wake of the Second Vatican Council, and inspired by the grace of Renewal, Sion Community came into being as a collaborative community for mission and evangelisation.

www.sioncommunity.org.uk/jubilee.php

Small Group Faith Sharing Resources

Five sessions have been created for use in small parish faith sharing groups to help people prepare for the Papal Visit. They have been written to unpack the meaning of the theme of the Visit which is 'Heart speaks unto heart'. The sessions are titled: 'The heart of God', 'A heart that Sees', 'A heart that understands', 'A heart that seeks justice' and 'A heart that serves'.

Materials will similarly be available for use after the visit to assist reflection about where to go from here.



<http://www.thepapalvisit.org.uk/Get-Involved/Parish-Resources/Formation/Faith-Sharing-Groups>

Research: Second Coming

Four in ten young Americans believe Jesus will return by 2050. A similar number, 41 per cent, expect to see a single world currency in 40 years.

The poll by the Pew Research Centre questioned 1,546 adults aged 21-26 and asked them about a range of things they expected to happen by 2050.

It was the high number who confidently predict a Second Coming that raised eyebrows.

<http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/worldnews/article-1288647/Jesus-return-2050-expect-nearly-half-Americans.html>

RCIA Network

The RCIA Network is currently having its national conference in Manchester themed 'Bridging the Gap'.

The Network is made up of people who have leadership roles in the RCIA process in dioceses and parishes, and exists to support them in their work and to promote an authentic understanding of the Church's teaching about the Rite.



www.rcia.org.uk/