



Text for voluntary Home Mission Sunday appeal givers
September 2011

Home Mission Sunday Appeal

Today we celebrate the first anniversary of the Pope's visit to the UK and Home Mission Sunday, which is a day of prayer for the work of evangelisation in England and Wales.

A year ago we witnessed in the Papal Visit one of the most remarkable events in Catholic history in the UK, when thousands of people took to the streets to share in the joy of being a follower of Jesus.

IT IS SUGGESTED THAT YOU INSERT HERE SOMETHING BRIEF ABOUT YOUR OWN REMINISCENCES AND HOW THE PARISH PARTICIPATED.

Repeatedly during the four-day visit the Pope invited and encouraged us to be confidently Catholic, to witness to our faith in every way. His coming marked a new beginning, a renewal in the life of the Church which in the months that have followed has found expression in a wide variety of ways.

One significant way was that the Bishops of England and Wales resourced a Papal Visit Legacy initiative to support parishes called 'Some Definite Purpose', coordinated by the Bishops' Conference, Home Mission Desk. An accompanying resource was sent to every parish in England and Wales in January and throughout the year a series of events have been organised including a day conference in March to explore ministry and outreach to non churchgoing (sometimes called 'lapsed') Catholics.

Looking forward to 2012 a key focus of the work of home mission nationally is the running of a tour to support us to reach out to non churchgoing Catholics. The tour is called 'Crossing the Threshold' and will offer five resource days to cover every Province. More information about the event nearest to us and other home mission work can be found on the Bishops' Conference website – www.catholicchurch.org.uk

Shortly after the Holy Father's visit last year Archbishop Vincent Nichols of

Westminster wrote: “The Holy Father has given us new heart for our mission... He said we are to be witnesses to the beauty of holiness, to the splendour of the truth and to the joy and freedom born of a living relationship with Christ.” (Pastoral Letter, Westminster, 24th Sept. 2010) As we gathered in our thousands around the UK last year, this is precisely what we made incarnate, what we made visible to all those who witnessed our joy and celebration. One year on in our families and parish, we’re invited to continue to be those witnesses with fresh wind in our sails. This phrase ‘fresh wind in our sails’ is the theme of Home Mission Sunday and is what the Holy Father is reported to have said that his visit to the UK gave him. So too it can be for us.

Today, there will be a second collection for the work of home mission nationally. This money supports a number of different projects including – Little Way Week, Come Home for Christmas, the organisation of a series of Cardinal Newman Lectures, the collation of faith stories to promote the Catholic Faith, the creation and distribution of monthly free Home Mission electronic resources, liaison with ecumenical mission contacts, the running of a Catholic Enquiry Office and much more. The collection taken today ensures that as a Catholic Community we have people working at national level to promote the mission of the Church and to support us all in that work.

There are approximately 60 million people in England and Wales. It is estimated that there are just over one million churchgoing Catholics and approximately another five million non churchgoing Catholics. Every Catholic has a mission. We are invited to reach out to everyone with whom we come in contact through our love and service. Today is a day to be renewed in that missionary calling and, as you’re able, to support the collection. As St Francis is attributed to have said, we are reminded to “Preach constantly and sometimes use words.”

INSERT A SHORT PAUSE

Thank you for listening. Thank you Father for this time.

For more information about Home Mission Sunday and how to support the Papal Visit anniversary celebrations please see the Catholic Church’s national website:

www.catholicchurch.org.uk

651 words read at a moderate pace will take 4 – 5 mins to deliver with pauses.

Supplied by the Home Mission Desk, Catholic Bishops’ Conference of England and Wales.