



HOLOCAUST

MEMORIAL DAY



27th January 2013

BUILD A BRIDGE

How can our communities build bridges together?





Some Background

Our Holy Father, Benedict XVI, has made good relationships with the Jewish people a feature of his ministry as Pope. He is keen that from time to time all of us focus on the relationship we have with our elder brothers and sisters in faith. One day when we might well make such an effort is Holocaust Memorial Day kept all over the world on 27th January - the day Auschwitz was liberated in 1945.

Fifty years ago the Second Vatican Council began the task of opening the windows of our Church for the renewal of every aspect of its life. Among the documents of the Council *Nostra Aetate* considers our relationship with the Jewish people. The 50th anniversary of that groundbreaking declaration is a few years away but this Year of Faith when we recall the opening of the Council seems a God-given opportunity to do what we can to heal the first schism of the People of God – the rupture between Church and Synagogue.

When to keep Holocaust Memorial Day?

As Holocaust Memorial Day falls on a Sunday this year Catholics wishing to organise an event might consider doing so in the week leading up to 27th January. Choosing a Saturday would, obviously, exclude the possibility of inviting the local Jewish community.



Each diocese may organise an event for itself or encourage people to attend whatever has been organised by the wider community. Resourcing parishes to keep HMD is another option.



Suggestions for Parishes

At the beginning of each mass on 27th January, **light a candle** using the following or similar words:

“Today is Holocaust Memorial Day: by lighting a candle we remember the 6 million Jews and many others who perished in the Nazi death camps. We remember genocides in Cambodia, Bosnia, Rwanda and Darfur, as well as atrocities in Armenia.”

“As we celebrate mass let us resolve to build:

a bridge to connect to the past, to remember communities and individuals who perished;

a bridge to the future, to a world built on justice and respect for all;

a bridge to others in our community whose faith, way of life and culture is different from our own.

May the light of Christ given to us at baptism dispel all darkness from our hearts and minds; may we be bearers of that light in our local community and to the wider world.”



A Bidding Prayer



“On this day when we remember life lost through hatred, lack of respect, and indifference to the plight of others, let us pray for a better future. May we cherish in our hearts the truth that every person is made in the image of God so that we build bridges to those who are different, and speak out against discrimination.”

Resources

If each diocese were to circulate its parishes with details of local HMD events (and how to obtain tickets if necessary) this information could be included in parish newsletters or bulletins and on websites.

For a HMD resource pack - posters, leaflets, & further information on this year's theme:

Holocaust Memorial Day Trust: PO Box 61074 London SE1P 5BX
www.hmd.org.uk, Tel: 020 7785 7029.

To order copies of an excellent publication
About Booklets (free) call 0845 838 1883

Vatican Documents on Catholic-Jewish Relations:

Documents from the Holy See
Catholic Truth Society, London. www.jcrelations.net

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

Holocaust Educational Trust
BCM Box 7892, London WC1N 3XX, Tel: 0207222 6822
info@net.org.uk www.het.org.uk

For educational materials and visits:

Beth Shalom Holocaust Centre
Laxton, Newark, Notts NG22 0PA
Tel: 01623 836627 www.Bethshalom.com

The Imperial War Museum (permanent exhibition on the Holocaust)
Lambeth Road, London, SE1 6HZ
Tel: 020 74165320

General Information:

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