



CATHOLIC BISHOPS' CONFERENCE

Loyal Address to Her Majesty The Queen

BUCKINGHAM PALACE, LONDON, 27 MARCH 2012

ON BEHALF OF THE CATHOLIC CHURCH IN ENGLAND AND WALES ON THE OCCASION OF THE DIAMOND JUBILEE OF HER REIGN

Your Majesty, it is an honour and a pleasure to express the great loyalty and gratitude felt by the Catholic community of England and Wales for the outstanding and unstinting service you give to our nation and to people throughout the world.

We express these sentiments with particular warmth and admiration as you celebrate the Diamond Jubilee of your reign as our Queen.

Along with Catholics across the world, and especially in the Commonwealth, we join our prayers of thanksgiving to those of other Christians for the many blessings of your reign.

At this moment, we would like to thank you, in particular, for the gracious and generous welcome that you gave to His Holiness Pope Benedict XVI in his recent Visit to the United Kingdom. We recall with pride the words you spoke on that occasion, affirming our common Christian heritage and our 'contribution to the encouragement of world peace, and to the economic and social development of the less prosperous countries of the world.'

You also spoke graciously of the special contribution of the Catholic community to the wellbeing of our society, especially in our work with the poor, the homeless and in education. We thank you for those words and assure you today of our determination to continue to make our contribution to the common good of all, committed always to a shared search for truth in the practice of daily living, for charity in daily dealings and for compassion and justice in relation to those in need.

We would also like to make our own the words addressed to you by the Holy Father: 'The Christian message has been an integral part of the language, thought and culture of the peoples of these islands for more than a thousand years. Your forefathers' respect for truth and justice, for mercy and charity come to you from a faith that remains a mighty force for good in your kingdom, to the great benefit of Christians and non-Christians alike.'

Your Majesty, we thank you for your steadfast insistence on the great importance of our Christian faith, given in both word and example, alongside your appreciation of the contribution made by other religions in our rich and diverse society today. Our hope is that our society, enriched by the presence of many beliefs and cultures, will always maintain respect for our Christian heritage and the sure foundations it gives for a flourishing of true human fulfilment. The Gospel of Jesus, which we seek to serve, is a challenge to our society to think more deeply about the sanctity of life, the constant need for forgiveness and reconciliation, the faithfulness required in love and the self-sacrifice which brings true satisfaction.

Your Majesty, it is my pleasure to assure you of our prayers for you, now and in the future and, most especially, on the day of your Diamond Jubilee when special prayers will be offered for you and your family in every Catholic Church in England and Wales. May Almighty God bless Your Majesty, preserve you in health of mind and body and grant you every grace and blessing now and for the years to come.