



Home Mission Sunday 2007 'Where are they now?'



'Once a Catholic, always a Catholic...' Maybe, but hardly something that people involved in evangelisation would want to take as a motto. The situation of those who have left the Catholic Church, for whatever reason, must surely move us to action, which is why we have chosen them as the focus for this year's Home Mission Sunday, inviting Catholics throughout England and Wales to take steps to reach out to them.

Much research has been done on why people leave the Catholic Church. But another question is, what might help them to return? Surveys show that many lapsed Catholics would welcome an invitation to return but never receive one, perhaps because we are afraid of intruding on their privacy.

Even the word 'return' can be unhelpful. It is not a question of going back to a childhood faith which may also have been childish and needed to be outgrown. Each of us, practising or lapsed, is constantly invited by the Holy Spirit to rediscover and reanimate our faith at ever deeper levels. That means a journey, often painful, into the inner poverty and darkness which is part of the human condition, and which we are constantly begging God to have mercy on. It is this that gives us our solidarity, our communion with those who have left the practice of their faith, and helps us walk alongside them as fellow-searchers.

Mgr Keith Barltrop, CASE Director

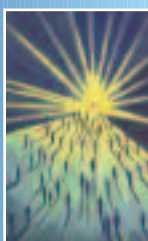


New Resources!

Don't miss our HMS Resources Packs which have been sent to every parish and religious house in England and Wales. Additional packs and A3 posters are available on request.

Recent CASE Highlights...

- **Fr Keith Barltrop** is chairing a group considering how Catholics can share the Gospel during the 2012 London Olympics.
- **Emily Davis** led four workshops at the inter-diocesan *Loud and Clear* Conference in Exeter which covered Plymouth, Portsmouth and Clifton dioceses.
- **Clare Ford** is collaborating with Oscott Seminary in developing the evangelisation dimension of their new training course for permanent deacons.
- **Fr Martin Ganeri OP** was a guest speaker at the Leeds diocesan day for renewal, *Reaching Out - Welcoming Home*, attended by over 300 parish representatives.
- **Clare Ward** addressed over forty BBC Radio producers about contemporary Catholicism at CMEC, the national Christian media conference.



Reach Out To The Lapsed

Do you know someone who is Catholic but who rarely or never attends Church? Most of us do and one of the central messages for this year's **Home Mission Sunday (HMS)**, which falls on **16th September**, is that your simple invitation could make all the difference in the world.



Home Mission Sunday is a special day when Catholics are invited to pray for and support the work of evangelisation in England and Wales. The collection taken directly supports our work. This year the theme is *Where are they now?* with the focus being to encourage and equip the Catholic community to reach out to non Church-going (lapsed) Catholics. All of us are called to go out in search of the lost sheep like Jesus Himself did.

Dave (not his real name) is twenty six years old and recently came back to the Church after an absence of ten years. He said, **'Since returning, I've gradually come to appreciate that the Church has so much to offer. It's great, but also challenging.'**



More than four thousand tailor-made resource packs have been sent out which include HMS posters for display in parishes. Homily notes and bidding prayers have also been provided to accompany the Mass readings, as has a booklet to stimulate discussion and action; the latter is packed with ideas for outreach. Please do get involved.

For more information please contact the CASE office or see www.casesources.org.uk

More on page two...



Looking for evangelisation resources?

Have a look at our *Evangelisation Directory* which includes details of over 250 different initiatives. To order a print copy, please e-mail: info@casesources.org.uk An online version is available on the CASE website.

What is CASE?

CASE is an Agency of the Bishops' Conference of England and Wales. Through a wide variety of resources and training, its remit is to enthuse, engage and equip all tiers of the Church in the urgent task of evangelisation.



Come Home For Christmas



Come Home For Christmas (CHFC) is a new initiative being run by the Catholic Enquiry Office from Advent 2007 throughout January 2008. It aims to offer a co-ordinated and seasonal welcome to Catholics who for different reasons no longer or rarely attend Mass.

The initiative is designed to support the invitation issued to parishes in September 2007, on the occasion of Home Mission Sunday, to reach out to potential returners. This gives parishes three months from the time they receive their HMS packs to Advent, to plan and prepare how and who they're going to invite back to the Church.

A national media campaign will be launched in December to kick-start the campaign. This is likely to include coverage in the Catholic press and also a six-part BBC local radio series reflecting the stories and challenges faced by those wishing to return.

Resources to support parishes include posters, tailor-made outreach leaflets, campaign fliers and a new dedicated website for non Church-goers who would like to explore coming back. The latter will be launched in November and can be found at: www.comehomeforchristmas.co.uk

The Catholic Enquiry Office will also be offering an information and listening service, and free reorientation packs on request.



Faith and Culture Comment: *Believing Without Belonging*

In 2001 the government census included a voluntary religion question for the first time ever. Amazingly, 72% of those living in England and Wales freely identified themselves as Christians. Yet, as we well know, far fewer actually go to Church. In fact, it is reckoned that only about 7 or 8% of adults in Britain now take part in traditional forms of religious practice, a decline from about 40% half a century ago. But what the census reveals is that a lot of people continue to value being Christian in different ways, even without feeling the need to go to Church.

Christianity still has a considerable place in our society. When we reach out to non Church-going Catholics we are engaging with those who often have a good knowledge of Christianity and who may have a living faith. We should promote and treasure this, whether or not they end up coming back to regular Church attendance. In reaching out, we also encounter those who often have much to teach us about what it means to believe in and practise the Gospel.

Moreover, some of those who do not identify themselves as Christian are also aware of the Christian heritage of our society and welcome the continuing presence and flourishing of Christian communities. They often argue that Christian values

Growing Together In Priesthood

...is the name of the process of ongoing formation for priests ordained less than ten years in Liverpool Diocese. CASE was recently invited to facilitate a training session focussing on the role and skills of the priest in the urgent task of evangelisation.



Brothers in priesthood: five of the recently ordained priests of Liverpool Diocese at their residential in-service training

Much of the inspiration for the event was drawn from the excellent document from the Congregation for the Clergy: *The Priest and the Third Millennium*. This describes how **“New Evangelisation needs new evangelisers and these are the priests who are serious about living their priesthood as a specific path toward holiness.”(PDV 82) To accomplish this it is fundamentally important that every priest rediscover the absolute need for personal sanctity.**

Fr Mike Crilly, one of the co-ordinators of the group, described a need to ‘**contemplate our collective mission**’ so time was taken to do this both prayerfully and practically. CASE input covered themes such as what the Church teaches about evangelisation and pastoral planning, the impact of diocesan restructuring and the crucial relationship between clergy and laity.

Participants said they enjoyed discussing the perceived challenges of evangelisation and the opportunity to consider some of the practical resources available to assist them in responding to those challenges.

Would your diocese (or other group) be interested in a similar event?

Please contact CASE at the address on the back page.

should remain prominent and are eager to receive the benefits of Christian schools and other institutions. As Christians, we should not lose sight of this interest and good will, even as we face the pressure and even hostility generated by secularising forces in our society.



Interested in finding out more? For a range of articles on faith and culture from the perspective of evangelisation, please see: www.casesources.org.uk/culturetalk

Mobile Phone Evangelisation

Text messages are being used by CASE for the first time to support a national evangelistic outreach initiative in England and Wales.

As part of the *Come Home For Christmas* initiative (see page two), non Church-going Catholics are being invited to receive information about returning to the practice of their faith, directly to their mobile phones. Enquirers need simply text *reactiv8* to 81025.

When CASE was set up, the bishops specifically requested that the evangelistic use of new technologies be a priority. We may send them one of our new text messages to tell them how we're getting on!

Website Update: we're pleased to announce that IMDC have been appointed the designers of our new website for young people aged 9 - 13. Exciting progress is being made. Please keep this project in your prayers.



Good News about those who give Good News

Keeping in Touch (KIT) is a lay-led ministry which seeks out and involves the whole parish in reaching out to all local Catholics, especially those who have stopped coming to Mass.

A trained parish team visits people in their homes, welcoming them as fellow parishioners, offering information about the parish and the opportunity to explore their faith and today's Church in small group meetings, if they wish.



Members of the Portsmouth Diocesan KIT Team at a recent meeting

The programme has been prayerfully developed in Portsmouth Diocese but is now attracting interest in parishes throughout the country. One parish priest has described it as **'a ministry for the 21st century'**. Meanwhile one person visited said, **'For the first time since I came here, I now feel I am really part of the parish.'**

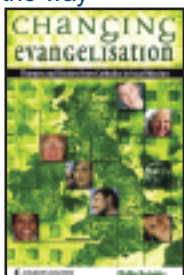
Information about KIT and other resources for outreach to non Church-going Catholics, such as the Landings programme, can be found in CASE's *Evangelisation Directory*.

Book Highlights Change

'What does evangelisation mean in a Catholic context? What does it involve? Who's doing it and how effective actually is it?' These are just some of the questions answered in a recently launched book that is supported by CASE.

Changing Evangelisation: Themes and Stories from Catholics in Local Mission provides a remarkable insight into the way Catholic mission and outreach are understood. The book's editor, Fr Philip Knights explained, **'This book attempts to provide an overview of the way Catholics understand their missionary identity. I'm sure that many will find it surprising and challenging.'**

Copies are available from www.mph.org.uk or telephone 01733 325002.



Youth Festivals

Festival going is a must-do for many young people and Youth 2000 is one of the new movements tapping into this popular activity.

It organises six weekend festivals of prayer each year which, with the help of both priests and religious communities, aim to be 'schools of prayer', providing an opportunity for people to (re)discover the beauty of their faith.

Youth 2000 attempts to plug young people back into God at the heart of the Church. Since 1991, it has helped thousands of young adults 'come home'; at least 60 have gone on to become priests and / or religious brothers and sisters.



Youth 2000 at Walsingham

In the coming months a new event will take place in Carmarthen (26 - 28th Oct. '07), and the New Year Prayer Festival will be in London (29th Dec. '07 - 1st Jan. '08). Please help publicise these events.

NOV News

CASE works closely with the National Office for Vocation. Here they report on a new Internet resource for young people.

Welcome to the Catholic Gap Year Website

The National Office for Vocation has launched a new website for people seeking gap year opportunities. Many people take a break in their career or studies, but are not aware of the many Church-based work and volunteering opportunities here in England and Wales. These placements include working in residential youth centres, working with the elderly or those with disabilities.

The National Office for Vocation recognises that for many young volunteers, a Church-based gap year provides a space where faith can flourish and, as part of ongoing discernment, often contributes to future vocational choices. Posters will be sent to schools and universities.



Please see: www.catholicgapyear.org.uk

Pause for Thought:

'While the son was still a long way off, his father saw him and was moved with pity. He ran to the boy, clasped him in his arms and kissed him. He said, "This son of mine was dead and has come back to life; he was lost and is found."'

Luke 15:20, 24



Dates for your diary Autumn 2007, please see:

www.caseresources.org.uk/diary

Hope 2008



The ecumenical vision for *Hope 2008* is for a year in which Churches are inspired to:

'do more, do it together, do it in word and action'.

Building on events such as *The Message* in Manchester, 2000, and *Soul in the City* in London, 2004, *Hope 2008* is the fruit of collaboration between denominations and organisations. The result will be Churches in over 500 villages, towns and cities across England, Wales, Scotland and Ireland, working together like never before.

In urban centres Churches will engage in town and city-wide mission initiatives that will impact the whole community. In hundreds more neighbourhoods there will be localised events and activities that will bring words of truth and acts of service to thousands of people across the UK.

The Hope team has produced excellent resources to help kick-start projects in your area, from working in partnership with the police, local authorities and primary care trusts to address issues such as hunger, debt dependency, homelessness and drug and alcohol addictions, to running school and university missions, fun days, BBQs, kids' clubs, estate clean-ups and much, much more.

This initiative has the potential to be a catalyst for a new wave of evangelism by word and deed that will have effect beyond the year itself. It is also an opportunity to witness to the unity of the Church. To get involved, please visit www.hope08.com or call 01273 571939.

Language Use: Throughout this newsletter, various terms have been used to describe Catholics who do not currently practise their faith by attending Mass regularly. Although some people are uncomfortable with the word 'lapsed', on consultation with experts, CASE found that this is the way such Catholics choose to describe themselves.

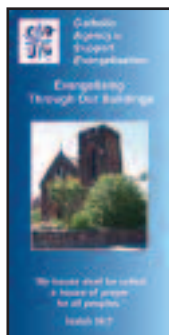
Buildings Resources

With the growing interest in spirituality in our society, CASE offers Catholics a workshop and a range of printed and online resources on how to use their Church building for evangelisation, especially during a local festival or other events. Our buildings have great potential to attract people to Catholicism.

For further information, please visit:

www.caseresources.org.uk/resources/BuildingsProject.htm

or contact the CASE office.



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Congratulations Brentwood

The Diocese of Brentwood has launched a new Commission for Evangelisation and Formation. The Commission began its work in January 2007 and includes the work of adult religious education, the Diocesan Pastoral Council and the Pastoral Support Team. The Commission's overriding aim will be to make the Word of God better known and understood.

New initiatives are already underway. Earlier this year, people from four different dioceses attended the first *Take and Read Weekend* at Abbotswick House of Prayer, outside Brentwood. As a follow-up to *The Gift of Scripture*, the Bishops' document on the Bible, a series called *Take and Read* is being produced for Bible groups. Work is also going ahead on an evangelisation website.



L to R: Fr Gerald O'Collins SJ, Bishop Thomas McMahon, Fr Adrian Graffy

The Commission was launched with a lecture from Fr Gerald O'Collins SJ, and a major day on St Paul is being planned. For information about the work of the Commission, please email clive@dioceseofbrentwood.org

A Non Church-Goer's Prayer

Lord,

I offer You my seeking; show me the way.

I offer You my doubts; lead me to trust in You.

I offer You my hurts; heal me.

I offer You my fears; give me hope.

I offer You my loneliness; welcome me.

I offer You my heart; warm it with love.

I offer You my journey; lead me home.

AMEN

Prayer adapted from the KIT
(Keeping In Touch) Programme



New Website For Lapsed

www.comehomeforchristmas.co.uk is a brand new online resource for those wanting to explore returning to the practice of their Catholic faith. It will be launched in mid-November to support a national outreach campaign called *Come Home For Christmas* (please see page two).

The website will feature video and audio testimonies of people who for many years were non Church-going. It will offer articles about the obstacles to returning, how to come back and information about events.

There will also be welcome messages from the Bishops of England and Wales, amongst other pages.

Please give the address to anyone who might be interested.

