

# PAPAL VISIT TO THE UK 16th-19th September 2010

## **The Legacy: Heart Speaks unto Heart Prayer Image For Parishes**

### **Introduction**

This image was originally painted by the world-famous artist, William Holman Hunt in 1900 and is titled 'The Light of the World'. Every parish in England and Wales has received a copy to commemorate the visit of His Holiness, Pope Benedict XVI to the United Kingdom in September 2010. Each copy was blessed by the Pope at the Prayer Vigil in Hyde Park, London, on 18th September 2010. It is hoped that they will be used to encourage people to pray in their homes and also as a source of grace and consolation to those who are not Catholics but wish to prayerfully sit with the image.

### **The Painting**

It is by kind permission of the Dean and Chapter of St Paul's Cathedral in London that this image has been reproduced. Hunt produced three of these paintings. The artist began work on the first picture when he was a little over 21 years old, but it was not until he was 29 that he finished it. One of the reasons for this length of time was his desire to perfect the dawn, and this he did not succeed in doing until he took the picture with him to the Middle East and found the perfect dawn outside Bethlehem. When he was nearly 70 years old, he painted a replica which hangs in St Paul's Cathedral, London. The replica is very much larger than the original which can be viewed at Keble College in Oxford.

### **Symbols: Observe and reflect**

'A sermon in a frame,' is one way this painting has been described such is the richness of its imagery. Either on your own or in a small group please take a moment to observe and reflect.

You are invited to read the following text, taking time to explore and study the different parts of the painting. If you are in a group, you might want to read the text aloud whilst remaining silent for a minute or two during each reflection pause.

### **Reflection**

There are two lights shown in the picture. The lantern is the light of conscience.

#### *Pause for reflection*

The light around the head is the light of salvation. The crown of thorns on Christ's head reminds us of his sacrifice for mankind on the Cross.

#### *Pause for reflection*

Behind him, the magical blue-green sky with a flying bat show that the hour is late.

#### *Pause for reflection*

The door represents the human heart and soul, which cannot be opened from the outside. There is no handle on the door, it can only be opened from within.

#### *Pause for reflection*

The rusty nails and hinges overgrown with ivy denote that the door has either never or not been opened for a very long time. The figure of Christ is asking for permission to enter.

Are there parts of our lives where we find it hard to open the door to him?

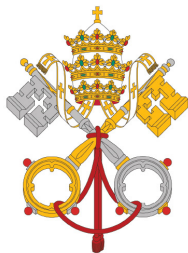
#### *Pause for reflection*

The autumn weeds and fallen fruit represent the autumn of life.

#### *Pause for reflection*

The writing under the picture, which is rather hard to read, is taken from the Book of Revelation chapter 3: 'Look, I am standing at the door, knocking. If one of you hears me calling and opens the door, I will come in to share a meal at that person's side.'

#### *Pause for reflection*



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Now read the text above again in silence, starting, 'There are two lights...' This time invite Jesus to speak to your heart as you revisit every reflection point. Listen.

If you are in a group, after 10 - 15 mins of reflection time, you may choose to share your thoughts with others, but there is no expectation that you do so if you prefer not to.

### Prayers

Thank you for this time of quiet reflection Lord.  
Thank you for speaking to my heart.  
Grant me the grace to ever more generously open my heart to you every day.  
Preserve me from keeping the door of my heart shut to you.  
I never want to separate myself from you.  
Jesus, you are the source of healing, love and life.  
Thank you for your presence here now.  
Stay with me so that as I leave here shortly, I do so as a living tabernacle of your presence.  
AMEN

Lord, Blessed John Henry Newman penned this prayer of desire to shine your light everywhere he went. I make this my mission prayer now with him:

Dear Jesus, help me to spread Thy fragrance everywhere I go.  
Flood my soul with Thy spirit and life.  
Penetrate and possess my whole being so utterly that all my life may only be a radiance of Thine.  
Shine through me, and be so in me that every soul I come in contact with may feel Thy presence in my soul.  
Let them look up and see no longer me but only Jesus!  
Stay with me, and then I shall begin to shine as Thou shinest,  
so to shine as to be a light to others;  
the light, O Jesus, will be all from Thee;  
none of it will be mine;  
it will be Thou shining on others through me.  
Let me thus praise Thee in the way Thou dost love best  
by shining on those around me.  
Let me preach Thee without preaching,

not by words but by my example,  
by the catching force of the sympathetic influence of what I do,  
the evident fulness of the love my heart bears to Thee.  
AMEN

*By Blessed John Henry Cardinal Newman  
(1801 - 1890)*

God Our Father, please bless Pope Benedict, our bishops, priests and our whole community.  
AMEN

### Guidance Note

This sheet can be used by individuals or to support a small gathering of people who want to pray together.

It is suggested that you set aside 30 - 45 mins to pray in this way.

You may also choose to light the blessed candle that accompanies this image during your prayer time.

### Heart Speaks unto Heart: Continuing the Journey

For additional resources and information about the Catholic Church in England and Wales, the Visit of the Pope to the UK in 2010 and the Catholic Faith, please see the following websites:

[www.catholicchurch.org.uk](http://www.catholicchurch.org.uk)  
[www.thepapalvisit.org.uk](http://www.thepapalvisit.org.uk)  
[www.life4seekers.co.uk](http://www.life4seekers.co.uk)

### Credits

Some of this text was adapted and sourced from:  
<http://www.keble.ox.ac.uk/>  
<http://www.explore-stpauls.net/oct03/textMM/LightWorldN.htm>

This sheet was created by the Home Mission Desk of the Catholic Bishops' Conference of England and Wales in support of the Papal Visit 2010.