



Saints

Speech, Palace of Holyrood House in Edinburgh, 16 September 2010



'Your Majesty,

'Thank you for your gracious invitation to make an official visit to the United Kingdom and for your warm words of greeting on behalf of the British people... The name of Holyroodhouse, Your Majesty's official residence in Scotland, recalls the "Holy Cross" and points to the deep Christian roots that are still present in every layer of British life. The monarchs of England and Scotland have been Christians from very early times and include outstanding saints like Edward the Confessor and Margaret of Scotland. As you know, many of them consciously exercised their sovereign duty in the light of the Gospel, and in this way shaped the nation for good at the deepest level.

FOR REFLECTION

The Holy Father affirmed in his address to the Queen the forces for good in Britain's history - outstanding leaders and authority figures who became saints. Whilst everyone isn't called to serve as a leader, we are all called to become, by God's grace, saints. Sainthood can seem a far off reality, even an impossibility. Most of us know that we can't make grand gestures and find it hard enough just to respond to the most basic parts of Jesus's teaching centred on the command to love God and our neighbour day-by-

About this resource

In his speeches and homilies Pope Benedict XVI left the Church in England and Wales a legacy of reading material for ongoing reflection and prayer. From November 2011 - October 2012 one sheet will be offered monthly to assist deepening our shared appreciation and understanding of what he said.

*Home Mission,
Desk, Catholic
Bishops'
Conference of
England and
Wales*



As a result, 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.

"We find many examples of this force for good throughout Britain's long history."

Full text: <http://www.thepapalvisit.org.uk/Replay-the-Visit/Speeches/Speeches-16-September/Pope-Benedict-XVI-s-Speech-to-The-Queen>

day. This daily struggle, daily commitment to trying to follow Jesus's example is transformational. Each day we are invited to try to win, what some might call, little battles over self so as to become less selfish and more selfless. It takes time and doesn't mean that we never fail and never make mistakes. This month let's pray to become saints.





MARY, MOTHER OF THE LORD

‘Outstanding among the saints is Mary, Mother of the Lord and mirror of all holiness. In the Gospel of Luke we find her engaged in a service of charity to her cousin Elizabeth, with whom she remained for “about three months” (Lk 1:56) so as to assist her in the final phase of her pregnancy. “Magnificat anima mea Dominum”, she says on the occasion of that visit, “My soul magnifies the Lord” (Lk 1:46). In these words she expresses her whole programme of life: not setting herself at the centre, but leaving space for God, who is encountered both in prayer and in service of neighbour—only then does goodness enter the world. Mary’s greatness consists in the fact that she wants to magnify God, not herself. She is lowly: her only desire is to be the handmaid of the Lord (cf. Lk 1:38, 48). She knows that she will only contribute to the salvation of the world if, rather than carrying out her own projects, she places herself completely at the disposal of God’s initiatives. Mary is a woman of hope: only because she believes in God’s promises and awaits the salvation of Israel, can the angel visit her and call her to the decisive service of these promises. Mary is a woman of faith: “Blessed are you who believed”, Elizabeth

says to her (cf. Lk 1:45). The Magnificat—a portrait, so to speak, of her soul—is entirely woven

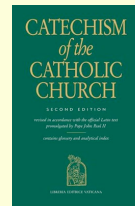


from threads of Holy Scripture, threads drawn from the Word of God. Here we see how completely at home Mary is with the Word of God, with ease she moves in and out of it. She speaks and thinks with the Word of God; the Word of God becomes her word, and her word issues from the Word of God. Here we see how her thoughts are attuned to the thoughts of God, how her will is one with the will of God. Since Mary is completely imbued with the Word of God, she is able to become the Mother of the Word Incarnate. Finally, Mary is a woman who loves. How could it be otherwise? As a believer who in faith thinks with God’s thoughts and wills with God’s will, she cannot fail to be a woman who loves. We sense this in her quiet gestures, as recounted by the infancy narratives in the Gospel. We see it in the delicacy with which she recognizes the need of the spouses at Cana and makes it known to Jesus. We see it in the humility with which she recedes into the background during Jesus’ public life, knowing that the Son must establish a new family and that the Mother’s hour will come only with the Cross, which will be Jesus’ true hour (cf. Jn 2:4; 13:1). When the disciples flee, Mary will remain beneath the Cross (cf. Jn 19:25-27); later, at the hour of Pentecost, it will be they who gather around her as they wait for the Holy Spirit (cf. Acts 1:14).’

Deus Caritas Est, 41 More: http://www.vatican.va/holy_father/benedict_xvi/encyclicals/documents/hf_ben-xvi_enc_20051225_deus-caritas-est_en.html

Pause to re-read this extract and to reflect.

Communion of Saints



‘Since all the faithful form one body, the good of each is communicated to the others...

We must therefore believe that there exists a communion of goods in the Church. But the most important member is Christ, since he is the head.’

Catechism of the Catholic Church 947

St Edward The Confessor

Edward the Confessor was the son of King Ethelred III. His piety gained him the surname "the Confessor". His reign was a peaceful one characterized by his good rule and remission of odious taxes. http://www.catholic.org/saints/saint.php?saint_id=223

Diamond Jubilee Resources

The Bishops’ Conference has requested that on the Solemnity of the Most Holy Trinity, Sunday 3 June 2012, each parish will celebrate a Mass with prayers to commemorate the Diamond Jubilee of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II. More: <http://www.liturgyoffice.org.uk/Calendar/Info/Queen-60.pdf>