

PASTORAL LETTER **FOR THE FEAST OF CHRIST THE KING**

Dear Sisters and Brothers in Christ,

Today is the Feast of Christ the King. It is fitting that on the last Sunday of the Church year we affirm our belief in Jesus Christ the Son of God, our Saviour. He is “the same yesterday, today and for ever” (Hebrews 13:18). Our new year begins next Sunday with the beautiful season of Advent, a time of waiting and hoping that God’s promise to “be with us” will be fulfilled once more, both individually and as a community of faith.

The Year of Faith proclaimed by Pope Emeritus Benedict XVI also draws to a close today. It has been a time of grace, giving us many opportunities to reflect on the significance of faith in God and the implications of our relationship with Him. The different activities in parishes marking this Year of Faith have hopefully helped us to realise that “Faith in God is not a problem to be solved but an opportunity to understand our relationship with God”. (cf. Pope Benedict XVI).

Of course, every year and month and day is a time “of faith” for those whose relationship with Jesus is deepened on our journey through life. The sharing of faith in groups or with other individuals gives an opportunity to examine afresh what faith means to us. It asks how the words of the scripture and the teaching of the church should shape our lives. Our life of prayer gives space and time for God to “enter in” to the deepest corners of our being. Prayer, reflection and action are three pillars of the life of faith. The outreach offered by the “Come and See” program in the Cornerstone at St. David’s has been an attempt to share these truths with those who wish to deepen their own faith. It is a small step on the road of Evangelisation.

Despite the climate of our age, we are not alone on this journey of faith. We are bound together in communion with our fellow Catholics, ultimately in the Mass. That is the great sacrament of communion which is at the heart of our faith. During the days of Advent, the “WALK WITH ME” series of booklets available in your parish offer a daily help in bringing together the different worlds in which we live. The meditations can be used individually, or in a shared setting. They could even be offered as an Advent Gift to those who do not regularly come to our church.

This Feast of Christ the King has traditionally been associated with our young people. Every generation has been concerned about its young, and ours is no exception. Many of you, like me, have been impressed and edified by the young people who attend our Catholic schools. They are engaged in a serious search for the meaning and purpose of life and their place in it. I am grateful to Youth 2000 for the successful weekend retreat they organised for over one hundred young people in the Diocese earlier this year. They

will be holding a similar event in March next year. I encourage all parishes to choose one or two young people and invite them to attend.

The Diocese will celebrate the ordination of a new Deacon at St. David's Cathedral on Saturday 21 December. God willing, he will be ordained to the priesthood next year. This will be the first priestly ordination we have had for seven years and is one of the "green shoots" of vocations to the priesthood which are beginning to grow and flourish. Please continue to pray and support our six seminarians as they discern God's call to serve as priests.

The famous twentieth century writer G.K. Chesterton once said: "When people stop believing in God, they don't believe in nothing. They believe in anything". That is part of the darkness of a society which looks in the wrong places for meaning and purpose and fulfilment. May our Advent prayer and action shine the light of God's life into our hearts and into the heart of the world.

With every blessing

+George Stack

Archbishop of Cardiff

**APPOINTED TO BE READ AND MADE AVAILABLE IN THE
CHURCHES AND CHAPELS OF THE ARCHDIOCESE OF
CARDIFF ON 23/24 NOVEMBER, THE FEAST OF CHRIST
THE KING.**