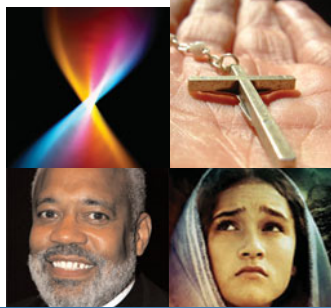




**Catholic
Agency to
Support
Evangelisation**



CASE NOTES

Issue 9 Winter 2007

Surfing the Waves



One of the most powerful tools of evangelisation today is the media and it's something that Christians should no longer be wary of using. Increasingly CASE is noticing that doors are opening if we are willing not to waste energy trying to make waves which the media fail to notice, but rather 'surfing' the big waves already out there.

A classic example was *The Da Vinci Code*. CASE, like Opus Dei and other Church organisations, saw an opportunity to promote the real Gospel which is far more exciting than a distorted version. More recently we have done the same with other films and TV programmes such as *The Monastery Revisited*, *The Convent*, *the Miracles of Jesus*, *Narnia*, *The Nativity Story* and *Into The Great Silence*, together with a *Don't Worry, Be Happy Day* (no, I didn't know what that was, either!) These opportunities help us to engage with a large number of people who share a common interest area.

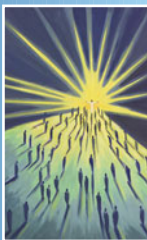
In your local groups and parishes, you can adapt this approach, for example, by putting on a 'Da Vinci Code Evening', or looking around at what local events are coming up, such as sporting fixtures or music festivals, or, again, creating your own such as a flower festival. The key is to see these not as something inward-looking (Catholics are good at that!) but as one of those 'new means and methods' of evangelisation of which the Church speaks.

Mgr Keith Bartrop, CASE Director

Recent CASE Highlights...

- Fr Keith introduced **Cardinal Zen** of Hong Kong to the media, during the Cardinal's recent visit to London, as a superb model of evangelisation in difficult circumstances today.
- Emily Davis hosted a meeting with the new Agency for Evangelisation in **Westminster Diocese** and explored ways in which the two agencies can work together.
- Fr Martin Ganeri OP took part in the annual **CAFOD** conference where the new campaign, *LiveSimply*, was introduced.
- Clare Ford produced electronic and printed resources for the **Bishops** to reflect on at their annual in-service.
- Clare Ward has been appointed Vice Chair of the **Christian Enquiry Agency** which complements the work of the Catholic Enquiry Office, run by CASE.

Please see www.caseresources.org.uk for much more.



Buildings Project

CASE is offering parishes and deaneries an innovative workshop and new materials on using our Church buildings to evangelise. We have 101 suggestions for making your Church a place which resonates, not just for Christians who worship there regularly, but also for those who have little or no connection with organised religion.

Somehow the Church, like other institutions today, is seen by many as oppressive, because of its power or its claim to have the truth. So much is individual freedom worshipped in our society! But a building needn't oppress anyone. If open and welcoming, it is an invitation to individuals to explore at their own leisure rather than being forced into the straitjacket of collective worship that we are, unfortunately, seen as offering.



Our Church buildings point to God in so many ways.

In our highly secularised age there is a great deal of spiritual searching going on. A large percentage of people in Britain pray, have some vague belief in God, regard themselves as spiritual people, visit Church buildings perhaps for a wedding or a funeral, and are often in search of a quiet place to pray.

Our new resources will be of particular interest to those wanting to reach out to such people, and to those whose Church lies in a tourist area or city centre: we look forward to hearing from you. Please contact us for samples of the leaflets we have produced or to hear more about our Buildings Workshop.



Are you looking for free resources? Want to find out more about local evangelisation opportunities? Please visit: www.caseresources.org.uk

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.



Sofa Outreach

Shoppers in one of England's busiest seaside towns have been given a novel opportunity to rest their weary feet as part of a new 'Spiritual Sofa Service'.

In the middle of Brighton, people were invited to enjoy an open air lounge, complete with sofa, lampstand, table and plenty of light refreshments. The initiative was supported by the Catholic Enquiry Office, which is run by CASE and works to promote and stimulate interest in Catholic life and beliefs.

Ben Gray, of the recently founded Elm Grove Community, was one of the organisers; he said, **'It's so hard to find space at the weekends, to rest, take stock and just listen. A small team of us simply made ourselves available to be of service to people.'**

The Catholic Enquiry Office provided free materials to hand out to passers-by. All of the sofa-sitters were offered cups of tea and the chance to chat about their life, its direction and the things that really matter to them. Conversations covered Christianity and who the person of Jesus Christ really is. One of the groups engaged with included an entire wedding party!

Around sixty people attended a follow-up event which included a talk given by Abbot Christopher Jamison of Worth Abbey.



Faith and Culture Comment: *Market Place Faith*

Seasonal Secularity: The Christmas season is often a time when the Christian community has to recognise just to what extent British society has become secularised. The streets and shops are thronged with men and women staunch in their devotion to buying gifts and food, but unconcerned with celebrating or even acknowledging the Christian basis for the festival. Christmas, it seems, proclaims not the manifestation of Christ, but His disappearance. Even the Christmas stamps mark the presence of Santa and his reindeer, but the absence of the Child Jesus and His Mother.

Faith and Public Debate: Yet far from fading into the background, religion in general continues to have a very public face. The last few months have in fact seen fierce debate over the role faith and the symbols of faith should have in civil society. There have been disputes over the wearing of Muslim veils and Christian crosses in public. There has been a battle between those who contend that faith schools tend by their nature to be socially divisive, and those who argue that it is the faith in faith schools that teaches our children to work for social harmony and justice.

25 Years of Maryvale!

CASE was delighted to be invited to the concluding celebrations of Maryvale's Silver Jubilee in November, the highlight of which was a Mass celebrated by the Secretary of the Vatican's Congregation for Catholic Education, Archbishop Michael Miller.



Maryvale Institute in Birmingham opened as an Adult Centre for Catechetics and Evangelisation in 1980. Since then it has gone from strength to strength to be one of the foremost providers of distance learning courses for adults in theology and related disciplines in the English-speaking world.

CASE's partnership with Maryvale hinges on the discovery that it is the very experience of engaging in evangelisation that makes many people realise how much more they need to explore their own faith. Accordingly, Maryvale invited us to contribute to a new course on Evangelisation and Ministry, which is now in its third year and has attracted many students.

Course pathways include: family evangelisation and ministry, youth evangelisation and ministry, parish evangelisation and ministry and evangelisation and ministry to the sick.

To find out more, please contact: info@caseresources.org.uk or evangelise.maryvale@dial.pipex.com

Although prevented from attending the anniversary celebrations at the last minute by a puncture, we shared in spirit in this very joyful occasion.

Witnessing to the True Message of Christian faith: Faith should be part of civil life and its public celebration is the basis for a properly flourishing society. While controversy may itself seem a bad thing, it gives us new opportunities to witness to the saving truths of the Gospel and to argue for keeping faith in the market place.



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

Media Inundated

Films, television and radio... CASE is inundated with media opportunities which we use proactively as tools of evangelisation to help promote Catholic life and beliefs.

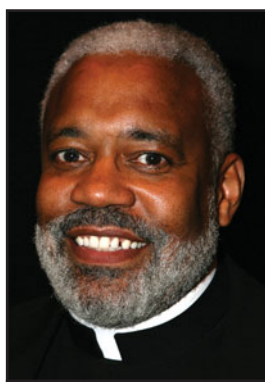
Recent partners have included the makers of *The Nativity Story* which had its world premiere at the Vatican. The film provides an artistic interpretation of the events that led up to the birth of Christ: the betrothal of Mary and Joseph, their arduous journey to Bethlehem, the finding of the stable, the arrival of the shepherds and magi, and the flight into Egypt.



© New Line Cinema

Don't miss our **Don't Worry Be Happy Day** on 22nd January 2007. See our evangelistic web site: www.life4seekers.co.uk

Good News about those who give Good News



Keynote speaker:
Fr J Glenn Murray SJ
© Reutter 2006

Find it, own it, live it was the theme chosen for an ambitious event staged by Catholic Youth Services (CYS) at the National Indoor Arena, Birmingham. Over a thousand young adults travelled from across England and Wales to celebrate their faith, hear challenging presentations and even try their hands at Catholic Speed Dating!

The Oct '06 National Event was the first in a three year rolling programme being developed by CYS.

One year the focus of a major event will be for young adults, in another for those under eighteen and in a third for those who work with young people.



Such targeted events and strategic planning are signs of healthy youth ministry, and CASE is continually collaborating with CYS to promote the evangelistic dimension of this vital work. Please see www.catholicyouthservices.org.uk or contact CASE for a free youth resource booklet.

Home Mission Sunday: Thanks!

Home Mission Sunday is one of the key events of the year in CASE's calendar. Once again, we were really encouraged by the positive reception of our *Dying To Live* Resource Pack, and are very grateful for your generous donations. Please let us know if you would like extra copies of the *Resource Catalogue* or any of our other materials.



COMPETITION WINNER!

The winner of our Christmas Card Competition is **Louise Smith**, aged 11, from North Wales. Well done!



Flying the Flag in Brussels

CASE was privileged to coordinate the English and Welsh delegation at the recent International Congress on the New Evangelisation in Brussels (ICNE).

Themed *'Come and See'* (John 1:39), the event saw over 5000 people gather from all over the world for a week of talks, prayer, testimonies, discussion and evangelistic outreach in the heart of the city. Five workshops were offered by people from the UK; resources from some of these are available from www.casesources.org.uk/downloads

The English and Welsh delegation was headed by Bishop Emeritus of Hexham and Newcastle, the Rt Rev Ambrose Griffiths OSB. He said, **'The Congress gave us all hope and an enlarged vision of the many new communities and numerous initiatives which are producing growth in the Church.'**



Next year's Congress will be held in Budapest from 16th to 22nd September. Interested in attending? Please contact CASE.

NOV News

CASE works closely with the National Office for Vocation. Here they share a reflection on their recent annual conference.

At this year's annual conference of Diocesan Vocations Personnel, there was considerable discussion about the changing profile of enquirers for priesthood and the religious life. Whilst older candidates are still coming forward, there has been a marked increase in interest from young candidates.

In recent decades, many young people were told to get some so-called 'life experience' before they applied to enter priestly formation. However, simply telling young people to 'Go away and come back later,' is rarely going to be a responsible and appropriate response. Whatever candidates' ages, an authentic pastoral response demands that they be taken seriously and accompanied on their journeys.



Pause for Thought:

*'If you love, you will be crucified.
If you do not love, then you are
already dead.'*

Herbert McCabe OP



Dates for your diary Winter 2007, please see:

www.caseresources.org.uk/diary

New Movements Invaluable



International Meeting of New Movements in Rome

'Spirit-inspired, pioneering and visionary' is the way the new movements have been described and that's precisely what was encountered at a recent meeting hosted by CASE.

Present were representatives of Sion Catholic Community for Evangelism, CaFE, Alpha for Catholics, the Cursillo Movement, Youth 2000 and Maryvale. These are just a few of the bigger groups working at a national level in England and Wales, enabling Catholics to deepen their own faith and share it with others. The purpose of the gathering was largely to explore ways in which collaborative working could be furthered.

There was a short presentation by each group about its work, overall vision, strategy and main projects for 2007. Each group offers its own specialisation in which it is recognised as a beacon of good practice. The areas of expertise covered include: training for and provision of missions, the production of resources for small communities, the facilitation of retreats and training programmes. This was the first time this assembly had been brought together, a fact which, in itself, generated energy and dynamism.

The new movements are invaluable to the Church in England and Wales and they are most effective if used in partnership rather than in isolation. The *CASE Directory* affirms their role in the urgent task of evangelisation proposing them as key resources for dioceses, parishes, individuals and families.

Watch this space as plans unfold in the months ahead relating to partnerships, events and associates.

New Technologies



God's iPod

© www.godsipod.com

Blogs, RSS news feeds and podcasts are three of the hottest new arrivals in the virtual world as CASE learnt at a recent conference on the new technologies. The event offered the opportunity to explore where trends are heading and the potential uses of some of the new media.

Speakers also provided a fascinating insight into the emergence of virtual worlds such as *Second Life* where over a million people are daily living out virtual lives with virtual personas. The Church must use opportunities like this for evangelistic engagement and outreach.

For excellent Catholic podcasts, don't miss www.pray-as-you-go.org.uk and coming soon... CASE's new blog for enquirers.

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Raindrops Keep Falling...

...but the pilgrims kept coming! Hundreds of faithful pilgrims battled with the elements to join the Middlesbrough Diocesan Pilgrimage to the Shrine of Our Lady of Mount Grace in Osmotherley this year. Armed with umbrellas, waterproofs and wellingtons, the weather-hardy visitors would not be deterred.

The annual pilgrimage can attract several thousand pilgrims and serves as an evangelisation event in itself. This year CASE was represented, offering a display area, free evangelisation resources and (courtesy of our new gazebo) shelter from the merciless rain.

Osmotherley has been a place of pilgrimage since at least the fourteenth century, and, to this day, individuals and groups still find a spiritual sanctuary at this ancient shrine.

The lasting appeal of shrines like this suggests that there is still a demand for places that provide quiet, peace and a haven from the demands of modern life. The evangelisation potential is not to be under-estimated.



View from Shrine when clouds cleared
© www.olotrosarypeterlee.co.uk

Pause for Prayer

God, our Father,
our human nature is the wonderful work of Your hands,
made still more wonderful by Your work of redemption.
Your Son took to Himself our humanity,
grant us a share in the Godhead of
Jesus Christ, Who lives and reigns
with You and the Holy Spirit,
God for ever and ever.
AMEN

From *The Divine Office*



Please Can You Help?

CASE does not often appeal for money, but we have an exciting project for which we need extra funding:
the setting up of a website for children.



The site will instruct and enthuse them about their faith so that they can begin evangelising at a young age. This new resource will be presented in an upbeat way, featuring games, stories, fun activities and possibly a chat room. It will be linked to the RE curricula of Catholic and other schools, and to family life. If you are able to help, please contact us for more details.