



LONDON PRELATE GIVES 3 MODELS, SECRET TO WELL-BEING

Archbishop of Westminster Writes 1st Pastoral Letter

LONDON, SEPT. 18, 2009 ([Zenit.org](http://www.zenit.org)).- In his first pastoral letter as the archbishop of Westminster, Vincent Nichols is affirming that prayer is essential for well-being, and proposing three models of particular significance this year.

Archbishop Nichols, who was appointed to the Westminster Archdiocese in April, took up the relationship with Christ as the theme for his first letter, which was released today.

"A sound practice of daily prayer is essential for our well-being," the prelate affirmed. And he suggested St. Thérèse of Lisieux, Cardinal John Henry Newman, and St. John Vianney could offer help in growing closer to Christ.

Each of those models has a particular significance for England this year.

St. Thérèse "teaches us that prayer can indeed be part of our daily routine, knitted into the regular tasks of the day," the archbishop said. "Through her own prayer she came to understand that her vocation was to love."

And, the French saint has particular significance for the faithful of the Archdiocese of Westminster because her relics will be in London in October.

"Many people find that, in her presence, their faith is strengthened, their prayer is deepened and they turn to God afresh, through repentance and the sacrament of reconciliation," Archbishop Nichols affirmed.

Astonishing gift

Cardinal Newman is a particularly timely model because his beatification is expected in the

summer of 2010, "the first English person to be recognized as a 'Confessor of the Catholic Faith' for over 600 years," the archbishop noted.

He continued: "As you know, he came only gradually to the fullness of Catholic faith. [...] Yet, in his own words, he came to recognize our faith as 'a working religion,' not concerned with ideas or vague generalities, but taking us up into the true worship of Christ himself.

"At the heart of Newman's sense of the realism of our faith was the real presence of Christ in the Blessed Sacrament, 'as real,' he said 'as we are real.'

"We can learn from him to reawaken in ourselves this faith in Christ's real, abiding presence in the Holy Eucharist, reserved in the Tabernacle. [...] In this way we not only build up our own life of prayer but also encourage each other, in church, to give this precious time to him. After all, he is the only one who can bring lasting peace into our lives."

Finally, Archbishop Nichols offered St. John Vianney as a model, the patron of this year's Year for Priests.

"He too reminds us of the centrality of prayer and repentance in our lives, and of the astonishing gift we are given in the Real Presence of the Lord in our churches," the prelate said.

Archbishop Nichols concluded expressing his hope that "from those sources of strength and encouragement, may we be renewed in our faith and in our generosity towards all in need."

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Full text of letter, and audio and video format: www.rcdow.org.uk/multimedia/?page=audio&player=95