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CARDINAL: CATHOLIC CHURCH IS GUIDE FOR MANY FAITHS

Says Other Religions Are Welcoming Pope's Scotland Visit

VATICAN CITY, FEB. 5, 2010 ([Zenit.org](http://www.zenit.org)).- The president of the Scottish bishops' conference is affirming that people of other faiths look to the Catholic Church for leadership on current issues, and are anticipating Benedict XVI's visit.

Cardinal Keith O'Brien, archbishop of St. Andrew's and Edinburgh, stated this in an address today upon being received in audience by Benedict XVI.

The meeting was attended by 11 bishops from Scotland who are in Rome for their five-yearly visit, which will end Wednesday.

The cardinal told the Pope, "Your Holiness has let it be known that you will visit Great Britain in the autumn, and we are thrilled that your visit will include Scotland."

He continued: "We are certain that the Scottish people will give Your Holiness a heartfelt welcome.

"We hope that your visit to Scotland later this year will bring us renewed encouragement, vigor and joy as we seek to serve Christ in the circumstances of the present day."

"We have been inspired and enriched by the transparency and the profundity of your teaching," the prelate told the Pontiff, "which has in turn inspired us in our duty as teachers of the faith."

Leadership

He noted that "many people of other Christian denominations and representatives of other faith traditions in our country actually look to our Church for leadership in the great religious, moral and ethical issues of the time."

"They too welcome the prospect of a visit to our land from Your Holiness in the hope that they may gain a deeper appreciation of Jesus Christ and of the way in which faith and reason come together to shed God's light on the questions which both fascinate and trouble the human spirit," Cardinal O'Brien stated.

He listed some of these questions: "What does it mean to be a human person who is open to the transcendent mystery of God?

"How is this transcendence mediated definitively by Jesus Christ? How is human transcendence expressed in the moral and ethical choices we make about how we live and how we die?"

The cardinal concluded by stating, "With respectful anticipation we await your message, hoping for your guidance for our ministry as bishops."

Benedict XVI next addressed the bishops, underlining his joy at his scheduled visit to Scotland and encouraging them in their ministry. He gave each prelate a pectoral cross as a personal gift.

Scotland's total population of 5 million is around 65% Christian. Some 17% of the citizens are Catholics.

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On ZENIT's Web page:

Cardinal's address: <http://www.zenit.org/article-28266?l=english>

Papal address: <http://www.zenit.org/article-28263?l=english>