

CatholicVoices

Putting the Church's case in the public square



“I appeal in particular to you, the lay faithful ... to put the case for the promotion of faith’s wisdom and vision in the public forum.

Do not be afraid to take up this service to your brothers and sisters, and to the future of your beloved nation.”

Pope Benedict XVI

Homily at Bellahouston Park, Glasgow | 16 September 2010

“Talking about Catholicism in the mass media is not for the faint of heart, but nobody does it better than Catholic Voices”

John Allen, National Catholic Reporter

Catholic Voices

began with a single aim: to ensure that Catholics and the Church were well represented in the media when Pope Benedict came to the UK in September 2010. Inspired by that visit, it has become much more: a zone of friendship, uniting Catholics; a school of a new Christian humanism; and the laboratory of a new kind of apologetics.

For six months before Benedict XVI arrived, a team of 20 young professionals were trained in media skills and given intensive briefings on a series of “neuralgic issues” which cause controversy in the media. Taking as their model Blessed Cardinal Newman’s desire for “an intelligent, well-instructed laity who understand how faith and reason stand to each other, what are the bases and principles of

Catholicism,” Catholic Voices developed methods and principles of communication which they put into practice in more than 100 radio and television interviews before and during the papal visit.

The success and originality of Catholic Voices provoked widespread praise and requests for help setting up similar projects around the world.



“Being in a studio is not a normal thing; knowing that you are sat there being watched and listened to by a couple of million people, I don’t know if that ever becomes normal. But I understand the dynamic of the media environment, I know what the journalists are looking for, that helps me answer the questions well and put across the points that we would want to have put across, so that we are well understood in the public square.”

“During Pope Benedict XVI’s visit to Great Britain, it was difficult to turn on the television without seeing a youngish, articulate lay Catholic defending church teaching” *Cindy Wooden, Catholic News Service*

“One of the big innovations of this papal tour” *Tom Heneghan, Reuters*

“Catholic Voices were articulate, passionate, and concise; and communicated in ways that were human, accessible and normal. I hope they inspire others to engage with the media and speak up about their faith.” *Vincent Nichols, Archbishop of Westminster*

“Catholic Voices is one of the most tangible legacies of the papal visit” *Robert Pigott, BBC*





AUSTEN IVEREIGH
Co-ordinator, Catholic Voices



JACK VALERO
Catholic Voices

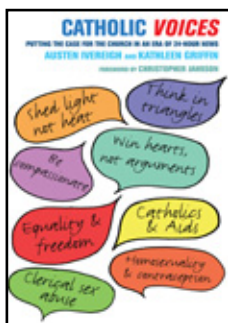
Who is involved

- **Coordinators:** *Dr. Austen Ivereigh*, journalist, commentator; *Jack Valero*, UK spokesman for Opus Dei; *Kathleen Griffin*, senior lecturer in broadcast media, University of Brighton.
- **Patrons:** *Daniel, Lord Brennan*, barrister, and chairman of the Catholic Union; *Fr Christopher Jamison*, director of the Catholic bishops' national vocation office and star of the BBC series *The Monastery*.
- **Chaplain:** *Fr Stephen Wang*, Dean of Studies at the Westminster diocesan seminary, Allen Hall.
- **Speakers:** growing numbers of 'Catholic Voices' who have been through the speakers' training programme and attended our workshops and expert briefings.

Since the Papal Visit

Since September 2010 the speakers have continued to meet for a series of talks and briefings. Dialogues have been held with humanists and sex abuse survivors. A new series of speakers' programmes and workshops are being planned starting in the Autumn of 2011. The coordinators have spoken widely in the UK and abroad about the project, assisting groups in other countries, such as Spain, to create similar teams. Catholic Voices have continued to speak in debates, write articles, and appear on TV and radio discussions and news programmes.

Two Books



Two new books share the project's fruits. *Austen Ivereigh & Kathleen Griffin*, *Catholic Voices: putting the Church's case in an era of 24-hour news* (Darton, Longman & Todd) is aimed at ordinary Catholics wanting better to explain their

faith; while *Jack Valero & Austen Ivereigh*, *'Who Know Where They Stand': Catholic Voices and the Papal Visit to the UK* (University of the Holy Cross, Rome) is a case study to help others establish their own Catholic Voices.

CatholicVoices

ACADEMY

On his visit to the UK, Pope Benedict XVI summoned Catholics to learn how to be “public” people, knowing how to navigate the crossroads of political and social conversation. His visit inspired the next steps for Catholic Voices: to help a new generation of Catholics to put the Church’s case in the public square and to share the beauty and wisdom of Catholic teaching through a respectful dialogue with our culture. The Academy supports the bishops of England and Wales in their “call to a deeper social engagement”.

Through regular meetings, briefings and debates, the CV Academy brings together Catholics committed

to the public square to develop common positions drawn from Catholic Social Teaching, the doctrine of religious freedom, and the value of family and life – helping to create a humanism, shaped by faith’s wisdom, which is open to all.

Academy members include existing speakers, as well as scholars, theologians, journalists, clergy, funders and supporters with gifts and skills to contribute. Briefings, public debates, lectures and panel discussions are held alongside regular workshops training Catholics to put their case reasonably and compellingly.



Please help us to:

√ serve both the Church and media by training informed, media-aware lay voices to articulate Catholic teachings on key issues;

√ support Catholics wanting to better articulate the wisdom of their faith through workshops, briefings, and authoritative arguments and information;

√ bring together Catholics engaged in public activities to develop commonly held propositions which express the insights and beauty of the Christian tradition, in order better to ‘put the case for the promotion of faith’s wisdom and vision in the public forum.’

For more information, please contact the coordinators at info@catholicvoices.org.uk

A company limited by guarantee, registered in England, 7493766. Registered Charity 1142482.