



VATICAN - Bishops of England and Wales come to pray in Propaganda Fide Chapel where Cardinal Newman was ordained a Catholic priest

Vatican City (Agenzia Fides) – The Bishops of England and Wales have recently been in Rome, upon the occasion of their first ad Limina visit during the papacy of Benedict XVI, on January 24 – February 4. On their visit, they also wished to visit two places connected to the life of Cardinal John Henry Newman (1801-1890): the “Capella dei Magi” (Three Kings Chapel) and the Cardinal Newman Chapel, both located at the “Palazzo di Propaganda Fide,” headquarters of the Congregation for the Evangelization of Peoples (CEP) and the International Secretariat of the Pontifical Mission Societies. On February 3, the Bishops, led by the President of the Bishops' Conference, Archbishop Vincent Nichols of Westminster and accompanied by the Archbishop Emeritus of Westminster, Cardinal Cormac Murphy-O'Connor, were hosted by Cardinal Ivan Dias, Prefect of the Congregation for the Evangelization of Peoples, Archbishop Sarah, Secretary of the Dicastery, and Secretary Adjunct Archbishop Piergiuseppe Vacchelli.

After a meeting discussing the situation of the local Church and the most urgent challenges, the Bishops gathered in the the Three Kings Chapel for a Mass concelebrated by Cardinal Dias, Cardinal Murphy-O'Connor, and Archbishop Nichols, which was also attended by several members of the Congregation's Staff. The President of the Bishops' Conference spoke on “the constant call to conversion” that should reside in the heart of every man and that was seen so clearly in the life of Cardinal John Henry Newman, who will hopefully soon be beatified. The Archbishop also spoke of the great longing that Newman experienced for a “universal and infallible authority,” which was what “eventually led him here.” In fact, Newman was not only ordained a priest and said his first Mass in the chapel in what is now the headquarters of the CEP, but he also resided there and attended classes at the Urban College, originally located inside the building. Archbishop Nichols called Newman “a remarkable convert” and said that it was “moving for us to be in this place, where we come so close to him.” As Archbishop Nichols mentioned at the close of the Mass, this visit to the Chapel of the Three Kings, site of the ordination of Cardinal John Henry Newman as a Catholic priest, had been a “precious part” of their visit to Rome and would remain forever in their memory.

After the Mass, Agenzia Fides was privileged to speak briefly with Bishop Michael Campbell, OSA of Lancaster (England), who commented that the “forthcoming beatification of John Henry Newman, a great Englishman,” was an “important event” in the Catholic Church, but also in terms of the ecumenical situation in England, as he is “revered by Catholics, Anglicans, and all as a scholar, a gentleman, and a saint.” (AR) (Agenzia Fides 04/02/2010)