



The Holy See

***CHRISTMAS MESSAGE BY THE HOLY FATHER BENEDICT XVI
BROADCASTED DURING THE BBC PROGRAMME
"THOUGHT FOR THE DAY"***

Wednesday, 22 December 2010

Recalling with great fondness my four-day [visit to the United Kingdom last September](#), I am glad to have the opportunity to greet you once again, and indeed to greet listeners everywhere as we prepare to celebrate the birth of Christ. Our thoughts turn back to a moment in history when God's chosen people, the children of Israel, were living in intense expectation. They were waiting for the Messiah that God had promised to send, and they pictured him as a great leader who would rescue them from foreign domination and restore their freedom.

God is always faithful to his promises, but he often surprises us in the way he fulfils them. The child that was born in Bethlehem did indeed bring liberation, but not only for the people of that time and place - he was to be the Saviour of all people throughout the world and throughout history. And it was not a political liberation that he brought, achieved through military means: rather, Christ destroyed death for ever and restored life by means of his shameful death on the Cross. And while he was born in poverty and obscurity, far from the centres of earthly power, he was none other than the Son of God. Out of love for us he took upon himself our human condition, our fragility, our vulnerability, and he opened up for us the path that leads to the fullness of life, to a share in the life of God himself. As we ponder this great mystery in our hearts this Christmas, let us give thanks to God for his goodness to us, and let us joyfully proclaim to those around us the good news that God offers us freedom from whatever weighs us down: he gives us hope, he brings us life.

Dear Friends from Scotland, England, Wales, and indeed every part of the English-speaking world, I want you to know that I keep all of you very much in my prayers during this Holy Season. I pray for your families, for your children, for those who are sick, and for those who are going through any form of hardship at this time. I pray especially for the elderly and for those who are approaching the end of their days. I ask Christ, the light of the nations, to dispel whatever

darkness there may be in your lives and to grant to every one of you the grace of a peaceful and joyful Christmas. May God bless all of you!

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