

Pope Benedict XVI met with the leaders of Religious Orders (part I)

*Le pape a rencontré au St Mary's University College
les responsables des Ordres religieux engagés dans l'éducation.*

On Friday 17 September 2010, Pope Benedict XVI met with the leaders of Religious Orders, especially those with a charism involved with education, and other invited guests as part of his morning at St Mary's University College, Twickenham. **As well as Fr Aidan Peter cj animating the music, one of the students from St George's College, Lucas Cooper, was playing the violin.**



At just after 9.00 am, Fr Aidan started the opening hymn of Morning Prayer. Following Morning Prayer there was a pause as we waited for the Pope to arrive. After *Veni Sancte Spiritus* had been sung several times, first the entourage and then Pope Benedict himself came down the centre aisle of the Church passing within a metre of Fr Martin cj, representing the Josephites.

During his [speech](#), which can be found on the Vatican website, Pope Benedict XVI paid tribute to “the outstanding contribution made by religious men and women in this land to the noble task of education.” He then went on to say “the presence of religious in Catholic schools is a powerful reminder of the much-discussed Catholic ethos that needs to inform every aspect of school life.” Pope Benedict concluded with the statement “the life of faith can only be effectively nurtured when the prevailing atmosphere is one of respectful and affectionate trust.”

After presenting St Mary's University College with a wonderful mosaic of Mary and the child Jesus, the Pope left to go across to the 'Big Assembly' where some 4000 school children, including 20 from St George's College, were waiting to greet him. While waiting for Pope Benedict to arrive four of the students from the College were interviewed by Sky TV.

This was a very memorable morning and it was good to have the work of teaching religious recognised by the Pope.