

# EVANGELISATION Continued...

## Sources of Wisdom and Authority

“Go out and make disciples of all nations...” - Matthew’s Gospel  
Evangelii Gaudium - The Joy of the Gospels



## Evangelii Gaudium The Joy of the Gospel

In 2013, Pope Francis wrote a letter to the world, called Evangelii Gaudium, which, in Latin, means ‘The Joy of the Gospel’. Its theme is the Church’s mission of evangelisation in the modern world.

**Pope Francis says that the heart of the Christian message is love for one another, which must motivate Christians to share the Gospel, help the poor and work for social justice.**

Catholics must care for ‘the homeless, the addicted, refugees, indigenous peoples, the elderly who are increasingly isolated and abandoned, and many others.’

Pope Francis says that when God became human as Jesus, he made himself lowly and poor. For this reason, the pope wants **‘a Church which is poor and for the poor’** (EG 198). He wants the Church to have a special love and care for **‘above all the poor and the sick, those who are usually despised and overlooked’** (EG 48).

Pope Francis also says that **the parish (the local community) is important in spreading the Church’s message.** As well as a church, many parishes have a Catholic primary and secondary school connected to them. These provide catholic education and help to spread the teachings of Jesus. Parishes should be welcoming places, ready to greet new people and receive them into the community. The Pope says that **Catholics should be outward looking; this means they should look for new ways to spread the Gospel message.**



**Fewer men becoming priests**



## Church attendance is on the decline



The UK is a multi-faith society in which people of different religions, and no religion, live alongside each other. According to the 2011 census, the profile of religious belief in Britain has changed considerably since 2001. Half of the people questioned still consider themselves as Christian, but Britain is now a place which has an increasingly diverse pattern of religious and nonreligious beliefs and practices.

This diversity brings benefits and challenges in evangelising in Britain. Although Christianity is still the largest religion, church attendance is on the decline. This means that churches have had to close, making it less easy for the Gospel to be spread. There are now fewer men becoming priests and existing priests are getting older. In the past, parishes might have two or more priests. Now priests have to serve several parishes, making celebration of the sacrament more difficult.

Catholics are much more likely to come into contact with people from different faiths backgrounds than ever before. The Catholic Church teaches that people of other faiths should be respected and Catholics should be sensitive to those who have no religious beliefs yet still seek to do good. Catholics should try to respect different and work in unity showing common values such as respect, tolerance, charity and non-violence.



**2011 Census: Half of the population consider themselves Christian**

## The role of religion in education

Today, about one third of state-funded schools in England and Wales are faith schools. This means that, although the bulk of their income comes from public funds, these schools have a ‘religious character’.

Of the 7,000 primary and secondary schools in England and Wales, 98% have a Christian character: 68% of Church of England schools and 30% are Catholic.

All pupils must, by law, be taught religious education and all schools should provide a daily act of worship. Religious education should reflect the fact that the traditions of the UK are, in the main, Christian. For state schools without a religious character, more than half of the acts of worship should be Christian. However, many schools celebrate a variety of religious traditions throughout the school year.

**98% Christian Character**

**68% Church of England**

**30% Roman Catholic**

## Evangelising in Britain

## Knowledge Check

1. What does it mean to be a multi-faith society?
2. According to which census did half of those questioned consider themselves Christian?
3. What has made the celebration of the sacrament more difficult?
4. Which Pope wrote a letter to the world named “The Joy of the Gospel”?
5. What is this translated in Latin?
6. In this letter, Pope Francis says that when God became human as Jesus, he made himself lowly and poor. What does he therefore call the Church to do?
7. What does it mean for the Church to be ‘outward looking’?
8. Of the 7,000 primary and secondary schools in England and Wales, what percentage have a Christian character?

## Choose a Task

1. Create a detailed mind-map (try to make this visual)
2. Create a multiple-choice quiz (aim for at least 10 questions)
3. Create a poster/leaflet

### CHALLENGE!

Turn over the mat and try to complete your task without looking at the information. Then refer back to the task mat to see what you have missed/could have included.

## Exam Question

*c) Explain the possible benefits and challenges of Catholic mission and evangelisation in Great Britain today [8].*

*In your response you must reference to the fact that religious traditions in Great Britain are in the main Christian and also diverse.*

## Summary

- The mission of the Church is to go out into the world and spread the Gospel
- The 2013 letter by Pope Francis, Evangelii Gaudium, deals with evangelisation. It is all Christians’ responsibility to preach the Gospel by loving one another, helping the poor and working for social justice
- Britain is a multi-faith society which brings benefits and challenges for evangelism
- UK law and culture is rooted in Christian tradition. However, the influence of other faiths and those with no faith has increased