

## UK University opens Benedict XVI centre



The new centre at St Mary's has the approval of the Vatican's Secretariat of State. St Mary's University Twickenham has established a "Benedict XVI Centre" for research into religion and social sciences.

On its website St Mary's said the centre was an "international hub for research and engagement activities in the area of religion and the social sciences (primarily economics, sociology, and political science)." Its director is Dr Stephen Bullivant, who is also a contributing editor of the Catholic Herald. The university said that the name of the centre had been approved by the Vatican's Secretariat of State.

The Pope Emeritus visited the university in 2010, leading a "Big Assembly" with 3,500 school children and meeting leaders of different religions.

St Mary's has also established the "Benedict XVI House", where a lay community made up of staff and full-time students pursue a life focused on prayer.

The new Benedict XVI centre, according to the website, was "founded upon the conviction that

interdisciplinary research, in which the sciences are brought into direct engagement with theology and ethics, is central to the life of a Catholic university (cf. Pope St John Paul II, *Ex Corde Ecclesiae*, 46).”

One of its first projects is to mark the 50th anniversary of Paul VI’s encyclical *Humanae Vitae* with a book that draws together scholars from different disciplines.

Founded in 1850, St Mary’s was granted the title of university in 2014.

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