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Pope donates $250,000 to Anglican ordinariate

Carol Glatz Catholic News Service | May. 1, 2012

ROME -- Pope Benedict XVI donated $250,000 to the Personal Ordinariate of Our Lady of Walsingham to help support its clergy and work.

The gift "is a clear sign of (the pope's) personal commitment to the work of Christian unity and the special place the ordinariate holds in his heart," said Archbishop Antonio Mennini, the Vatican nuncio to Great Britain.

The ordinariate made the announcement in a press statement May 1.

"The gift will help establish the ordinariate as a vibrant part of the Catholic Church in England and Wales," the statement said.

The ordinary, Msgr. Keith Newton, said, "This gift is a great help and encouragement as we continue to grow and develop our distinctive ecclesial life, whilst seeking to contribute to the wider work of evangelization."

Pope Benedict established the ordinariate to welcome former Anglicans into the Catholic Church. The structure provided a way for entire Anglican parishes or groups to become Catholic while retaining some of their Anglican heritage and liturgical practice.

Our Lady of Walsingham was the first ordinariate to be created after the pope issued his apostolic constitution *Anglicanorum coetibus* in 2009.

The ordinariate in England and Wales faces some logistical and financial challenges such as finding church buildings to use and supporting the former Anglican clergy -- many of whom are married with families to support.

Local Catholic parishes have been encouraged to share their churches with members of the ordinariate, and the Catholic bishops of England and Wales contributed 250,000 pounds to a fund that was set up to help to establish the ordinariate and to help pay for the salaries of its pastors. An additional 100,000 pounds had been donated by the St. Barnabas Society, a Catholic charity established to support clergy entering the Catholic Church from non-Catholic Christian denominations.

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