

BXVI Retreat 2010

Much like in years past, VEYO is hosting yet another Apologetics Retreat, the fifth of its kind in our Diocese. Derived from the Greek word *apo-logia*, meaning 'speaking in defense', Christian apologetics seeks to give clear logical arguments in defense of the truth of our faith, showing this same faith to be rational, sound and beautiful. These days the Catholic faith seems tragically misunderstood by people without as well as by Catholics within the Church, showing, at the very least, a sad lack of knowledge. It is, therefore, most important for us to know more than just the basics so that we may be able, as St. Peter writes, to "give an answer to everyone who asks you the reason for the hope that you have" (1 Pet 3:15). Such answer, St. Peter continues, is to be given with "gentleness and reverence" (1 Pet 3:16), which makes apologetics in general and our retreat in particular an exercise in Christian charity.

Such charity was the focus of Pope Benedict's first encyclical letter in 2005, which did surprise just about everybody as the Holy Father shed much-needed light on the reasonableness of the faith which says that "God is love" (1 Jn 4:16). Since then, Pope Benedict has successfully and beautifully tried to bring together (again) faith and reason. This faith of ours is intelligible and rational, showing forth truth, beauty and goodness in its teachings and its practice, and making the Church, who is the guarantor and guardian of this faith, an eminently beautiful, good and true institution. Despite the sinfulness and weakness of her individual members, the Church, so much bigger and better than the sum of her faithful, remains what we profess her to be every Sunday: one, holy, catholic and apostolic, and this is something we need to (re-)discover and help, especially the younger generations, find out and understand. Our apologetics retreat is, therefore, fittingly called BXVI Retreat. This year, for the second time, a series of 10 lectures will focus on controversial topics of Church history such as anti-Semitism; the Eastern schism; faith & science; the persecution of witches; the Church, power & politics; St. Joan of Arc; evolution and Catholic teaching; Galileo and the Church; and more.

Taking place from January 28th to 31st, 2010 at the Cathedral in Peterborough and adjacent Bishop Doyle Hall, the retreat is open to young people ages 15 to 30 and will be led by Mr. Anthony Schratz, lawyer and Director of Ernescliff College in Toronto and Dr. Leslie Tomory, Professor of History and Philosophy of Science at the University of Toronto. The days of the retreat are, of course, accompanied by prayer, Mass, devotion and adoration to connect with God and by plenty of social time to connect with youth from around the diocese and beyond. To register, please contact VEYO.