

CatholicVoices

*We put the Church's case
in the public square*



“ *The thing the church needs most today is the ability to heal wounds and to warm the hearts of the faithful; it needs nearness, proximity... You have to heal [people's] wounds. Then we can talk about everything else.*

— POPE FRANCIS





Training speakers

Since it began preparing people to put the Church's case in the news media during Benedict XVI's 2010 visit to the UK, Catholic Voices has come to be seen as one of the successes of the New Evangelisation.

In expert briefings, workshops, role-plays, books and hundreds of media appearances, we have shown how to 'reframe' contentious issues which lie behind news stories.

Our idea? To help the Church speak directly to our contemporary culture.

That means stepping outside the roles cast for it in the media, while speaking to the subconscious Christian values behind much criticism directed against the Church.

It means understanding the issues, to let the truth and beauty behind the Catholic tradition shine out.

It means welcoming the controversies, the attention, and the criticism directed at the Church, because these are our opportunities to communicate.

We use professional presenters and real news stories to help speakers adapt to the idiom of TV and radio, and to learn the art of putting the Church's case succinctly and compellingly in key messages.

In the UK we are building a nationwide 'studio-ready' speakers' bureau through an annual training programme held over three Autumn weekends (2011: Leeds; 2012: Bristol; 2013: Manchester; 2014: London).

Following the training, speakers are available to the news media to comment on news stories. There are 45 active speakers at present in the UK.

The coordinators help each speaker to prepare for interviews, and give feedback afterwards.

That is the method being presented by Catholic Voices.

It is not just about the lucidity of our arguments; it is about the effect that our words have on others. Our task is to present the truth with civility, empathy and clarity.

**CARDINAL SEAN O'MALLEY
OF BOSTON**



Building media presence

SOME OF OUR APPEARANCES IN 2013

BBC News
ITV News
Channel 4 News
Channel 5 News
BBC Daily Politics
BBC Breakfast
The Big Questions
Sunday Morning Live
BBC Newsnight
Al Jazeera News
Sky News
BBC World News
BBC Radio 4 Sunday
BBC Radio 4 Today
The Moral Maze
Woman's Hour
BBC Radio 5 Live
BBC Local Radio stations
BBC Sunday Sequence

Catholic Voices was created to improve the Church's public presence by offering to the media authoritative communicators of the Church's settled positions, in communion with our bishops but without being their official spokespeople.

The Bishops' Conference of England and Wales (CBCEW) refer media onto us when appropriate. They support Catholic Voices as part of its 'Confidently Catholic' agenda, encouraging lay Catholics "to know and live their faith with courage and give witness to it with confidence".

Between March 2010 and the end 2013, we did over 550 tv and radio interviews, doubling our media presence over those three years (in the 2010 Papal Visit, we appeared on just over 100 TV and radio programmes; during the Papal transition in 2013, on close to 200).

Catholic Voices offers a service both to the Church and the media. We believe both that the media have the right to hold the Church accountable and that the Church has the duty to clarify its messages.

Our media bids coordinator is at the end of a mobile – and will usually be able to find a Catholic Voice for any programme or news topic, even at short notice.

Perhaps the rarest thing in the Church, as in life, is a truly good idea. Catholic Voices is such a rarity – an imaginative and original answer to the Church's persistent communications woes.

JOHN ALLEN
NATIONAL CATHOLIC REPORTER





Preparing for the public square

In his UK visit in 2010, Pope Benedict called for faith and culture to be in dialogue, and of the need for “clear voices ... who could put the case for the promotion of faith’s wisdom in the public square”. Pope Francis has urged a “culture of encounter”, and the renewal of politics.

The Catholic Voices Academy exists to encourage and sustain the wider project through regular briefings, lectures and debates, helping Catholics develop common-good arguments based on Natural Law.

In 2012 the Academy published a briefing paper, *In Defence of Conjugal*, which argued against redefining marriage on grounds of the public good and the good of children.

Other topics covered have included euthanasia, humanising the market, faith schools and the State, embryo research, the living wage and changing minds on abortion.

Catholic Voices is marked by a love of the Church and a deeply rooted spirit... I think this attempt and challenge to bring faith and reason together in the public forum is crucial for us.

ARCHBISHOP VINCENT
NICHOLS OF WESTMINSTER

The Catholic Voices contribution to the ‘New Evangelisation’



In *The Joy of the Gospel*, Pope Francis calls on the Church to communicate “in a missionary key” – speaking first to the heart, and ensuring that the Church’s message is not distorted or reduced to secondary considerations. The Catholic Voices training helps the Church to learn to speak to the modern age.

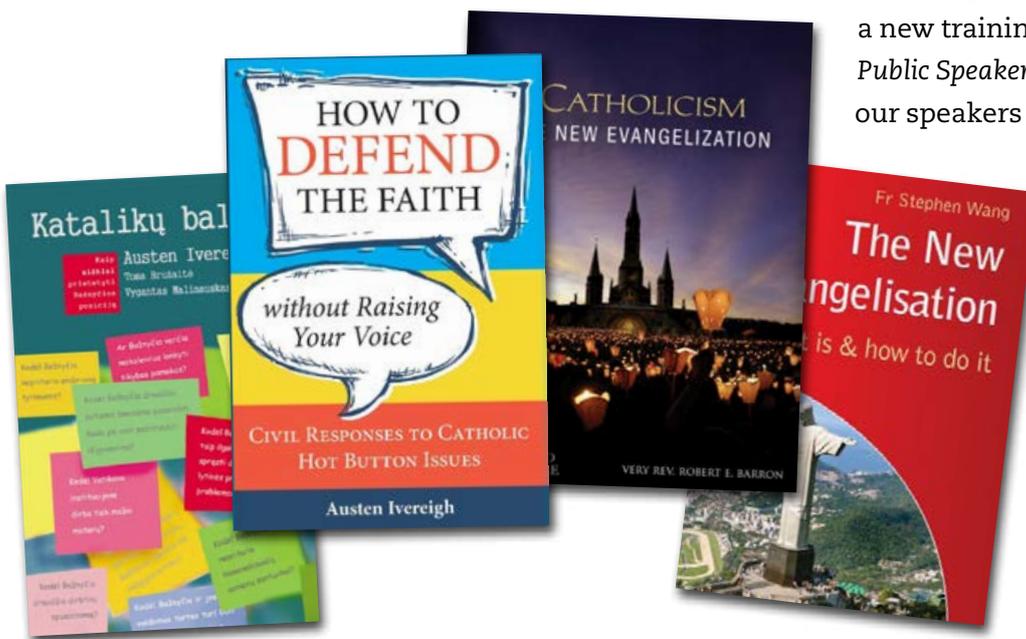
Catholic Voices is given as one of six examples of the ‘new evangelisation’ in the popular US series by Fr Robert Barron. And it is one of the examples given by Fr Stephen Wang in his *New Evangelisation: what it is and how to do it* (CTS).

Catholic Voices helps to spread both the content and the method of our approach by means of books, websites, blogs, briefing papers and talks to schools and parishes. Our blog, cvcomment.org, has over 3,500 followers.

Austen Ivereigh’s *How to Defend the Faith Without Raising Your Voice* is in both paperback and e-book, and has been translated and published in a number of countries abroad.

Members of Catholic Voices are often in demand as speakers and workshop-givers, to teach the CV approach to apologetics.

In 2014-15, we will begin offering a new training, known as the *Public Speakers’ Programme*, to help our speakers give presentations on hot-button issues in parishes, chaplaincies and schools.



Helping Catholic Voices take root across the world

In the three years since the Papal Visit to the UK, Catholic Voices groups have started in ten other countries (Ireland, Poland, Spain, Lithuania, USA, Mexico, Chile, Brazil, Argentina and Australia) following our trainings there. There are groups currently being formed in 2014 in Holland, Belgium, Italy, Portugal, Canada and Venezuela.

Each group has the blessing of their bishops, and is made up of lay, independent Catholics, who share our approach and principles, have good links with the media and are self-funding.

Every July we organise an 'International Catholic Voices Retreat' at Worth Abbey to build solidarity and share experiences of CV groups across the world. In 2014, leaders of CV groups across the world are meeting in Rome.

Thank you for the work that you do. I believe this effort is of critical importance to the life of the Catholic Church... I watched from afar with admiration the work that Catholic Voices did in the weeks preceding the visit of the Holy Father. It made me wonder how we could have a similar effort here in the United States. You are helping to make that dream a reality.

CARDINAL TIMOTHY DOLAN
OF NEW YORK

▼ Catholic Voices from different countries working in Rio during World Youth Day



▼ Catholic Voices started in Lithuania in February 2013



▼ Jack Valero and Austen Ivereigh with Cardinal Marc Ouellet, at Theology on Tap in Sydney



CatholicVoices

Catholic Voices is a company limited by guarantee, registered in England 7493766, and a registered charity 1142482. The registered address is 9 Warwick Square, London SW1V 2AA.

Its patron is Lord Brennan. Its chaplain in London, Fr Stephen Wang, is Catholic Chaplain to the University of London. The Board has currently six trustees and meets bimonthly.

Catholic Voices is run day-to-day by its four coordinators: Austen Ivereigh, Jack Valero, Kathleen Griffin and Eileen Cole. Although Global CV and clients are self-funding, Catholic Voices depends on donations to cover costs of training and the Academy. If you would be interested in contributing, please contact the coordinators on info@catholicvoices.org.uk

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