



Former Anglicans give thanks for ordinariate with pilgrimage to Rome

A group of more than 100 former Anglican Catholics recently concluded a pilgrimage to Rome, in thanksgiving for the creation of the Personal Ordinariate of Our Lady of Walsingham in the UK.

Mgr Keith Newton, a former Anglican bishop who is now head of the ordinariate, said the pilgrimage had been 'quite poignant,' as almost all of those in attendance were not Catholics until Easter last year.

"Now they have come to the centre of Catholicism, they have come to the tombs of saints Peter and Paul to pray and to give thanks, and I think they have been genuinely moved by this, really," Mgr Newton said of his fellow pilgrims.

Pope Benedict XVI personally welcomed the pilgrimage group during his weekly audience on Ash Wednesday (February 22), while Fr Len Black (above), a former Scottish Episcopalian, who was ordained a Catholic priest at St Mary's Church, Greenock, last year said that 'wonderful' is not a strong enough word to express what the group felt at being together in Rome.

"I am certain that, like me, this week you have all experienced the feeling of coming home," Fr Black told the congregation in St Peter's Basilica's altar of St John.

"Nowhere can we truly experience this other than being here, so close to the place where the apostle, Peter, gave his life for the Faith and where his successors have guarded that Faith for generations."

During the pilgrimage, Mass was offered for the ordinariate, which was officially established on January 15 last year, by Cardinal William Levada, prefect for the Congregation of the Doctrine of the Faith, and Cardinal Bernard Law, while the pilgrims also attended Mass at the basilica of San Giorgio in Velabro, which was Blessed John Henry Newman's titular church in Rome.

This Easter, the ordinariate will receive another 200 lay people and 20 priests into the Catholic Church.