

Archbishop of Canterbury to visit Rome

The Archbishop of Canterbury, Dr Rowan Williams, is to visit His Holiness Pope Benedict XVIth in Rome later this year. The visit will mark the 40th anniversary of the Archbishop Michael Ramsey's meeting with Pope Paul VIth in 1966 and the founding of the Anglican Centre in Rome in the same year.

Dr Williams met the Holy Father's predecessor, Pope John Paul II, in the autumn of 2003; he travelled to Rome in April 2005 for the funeral of Pope John Paul II and returned for the Inaugural Mass of his successor.

Churches welcome VAT scheme extension and expansion

The Church of England has warmly welcomed Gordon Brown's announcement to substantially expand the scope of the Listed Places of Worship Grant Scheme and extend its operation for a further three years until 2010-11. The move will save churches millions of pounds on the cost of major repair and maintenance work.

Christianity and Islam - religions of peace?

The Archbishop of Canterbury, Dr Rowan Williams, has said that the claims of both Christianity and Islam to be religions of peace need to be demonstrated through practical trust. Addressing the Sudan Inter-Religious Council in Khartoum recently, Dr Williams said that trust was essential when people with different views had to work together for peace. Both religions, he said, pointed to peace with God as a necessary starting point.

"To be at peace with God means knowing that we do not have to strive all the time for power over each other". He warned that trust had to be built: "Among these things which most stand in the way of peace is the suspicion that comes from the way people exercise power; when power is shared then trust is built."

Dr Williams said that Sudan's own situation pointed to being honest with one another; to face their failings, to listen to one another's fears. "So peace comes when we are at peace with God; we are at peace with God when we face our failings with honesty, we are at peace with one another when we share our power and resources..."

Traidcraft collects top social reporting award

Christian-based Traidcraft's approach to social reporting has earned top honours in the prestigious 2005 ACCA UK Sustainability Awards.

In a 22-strong field which included some of the biggest names in the City, industry, the public sector and the media, Traidcraft plc collected the award for the best social report - the fourth year in succession its name has appeared on the trophy list.

"After three years in which we have been joint runner-up, joint winner and sole runner-up respectively, it is wonderful to be sole winner of the award at last," said Traidcraft chief executive Paul Chandler.