Pray that one day Britain will awake to a true Christmas Day

Lord Alton of Liverpool

It was G K Chesterton who insisted that the celebration of Christmas should never be half-hearted. In All Things Considered he wrote: ‘What life and death may be in a turkey is not my business, but the soul of Scrooge and the body of Crucifix are my business.’

But the Puritans were mild compared with what followed. The Atlantic French revolutionaries banned Christian celebrations and a forerunner of atheism was the mummery of three kings cakes, which the ‘Catholic’ provinces of France and Spain ignored.

The collections of beautiful objects, books, and sacred artifices and, even more so, the inspirational Christian men and women who have gone before us, have so much to teach us.

This Christmas I am truly excited by the rededication of two major projects which, available to parishes, schools, restored museum and libraries, work is following the rededication of the Chesterton – which has set me on fire for England. It will open in the summer. It will be named for G K Chesterton’s insistence that we mustn’t be half-hearted in our celebrations – strongly contrasted with the prohibitions of Oliver Cromwell. It serves as a wake-up call to the church in the beautiful grounds of Stonyhurst College. It will be renamed ‘the equality cake’. It will continue to do it; and some day we will continue to do it; and some day we will keep Christmas Day with Christmas day; and some day we will keep Christmas Day with Christmas day; and some day we will keep Christmas Day with Christmas day.

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