

VENERABLE BEDE: SAINT AND SCHOLAR

VATICAN CITY, 18 FEB 2009 (VIS)

In the general audience, held this morning in St. Peter's Square in the presence of 15,000 people, Benedict XVI dedicated his catechesis to St. Bede the Venerable.

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Bede was born around the year 672 in the English region of Northumbria. When he was seven years old his family entrusted his education to the abbot of a nearby Benedictine monastery and he became, the Holy Father explained, "one of the most outstanding scholars of the early Middle Ages. ... His teaching and the fame of his writings brought him many friends among the principal personages of his day, who encouraged him to continue his work, which brought benefits to so many people".

"Sacred Scripture was the constant source of Bede's theological reflections". He considered "the events of the Old and New Testaments jointly" as "a way towards Christ", a testament to the same faith, "though expressed using different signs and institutions".

As an example of this, Benedict XVI mentioned Bede's interpretation of the construction of the Temple of Jerusalem: "Just as pagans also helped to build the ancient Temple by supplying materials and the technical experience of their master builders, so the edification of the Church involved apostles and masters who came not just from the ancient Hebrew, Greek or Latin peoples, but also from the new peoples, among whom Bede mentions the Irish Celts and the Anglo-Saxons".

