

- 1 If we look at the outside of some houses that are more than 150 years old, we can often see that at least one window has been bricked up. Why was this?
- 2 In 1696 the “Window Tax” became law - it was a new way of raising money for the government of the day. This was a tax on each window - the more windows, the more money had to be paid in tax. Wealthy people could afford to pay, and so they didn’t have to block any windows. Poor people and the less well-off could not afford the tax. Their only option was to brick up a window or two and have less light in the house.
- 3 A week ago - 24th July - marked the anniversary of the repeal of (the doing away with) the Window Tax in 1851.
- 4 *Let us pray:*

**God our Father,  
it was Pope John the Twenty-Third  
who was speaking about the need  
to bring new life to the Church.**


**To illustrate his point,  
he walked to his window  
and opened it wide,  
saying that fresh air was needed  
to blow away the cobwebs  
and refreshen the Church.**


**Father, do not let us  
shut ourselves off from others,  
but may the windows  
of our hearts and minds be open,  
so that we may be made new  
by your Holy Spirit  
and be influenced for good.**


**Inspire us, too,  
to let our light shine out,  
knowing that Jesus said  
that we are the light of the world.**


**Amen.**





 *The Window Tax was brought in under King William III (of Orange). Originally it was to bring in extra money to pay for the replacement of damaged coins. 100 years later the then Prime Minister - Pitt the Younger - increased this tax, and even more windows were bricked up! Another 50 years later the hated tax was repealed on 24th July in 1851.*

 *Mt 5<sup>14-16</sup>: “You are the light of the world... Let your light shine before others so that, seeing your good works, they may praise your Father in heaven.”*

 *Acts 20<sup>7-12</sup> - The young man, Eutychus, sitting on a window-sill, drops off to sleep as Paul preaches, falling out of the upstairs window. Paul prays and he comes back to life.*


 *Acts 2<sup>1-13</sup>: “they heard what sounded like a powerful wind from heaven” - the coming of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost.*

 *Queen Elizabeth I (1533-1603), regarding respect for the conscience of each individual, said: “I would not open windows into men’s souls.”*

 *The historical incident known as the “Defenestration of Prague” - when Czechs threw out of the window two diplomats from the Hapsburg rulers - led to the Thirty Years War (1618-1648).*

 *John XXIII was Pope from 1958-1963.*

 *Today is the feast of St Ignatius Loyola - see 31 March.*

 Colours of day; I watch the sunrise; The light of Christ

This is an excerpt from the page of this date in  
*'Praying Each Day of the Year'*,  
a 3-volume book  
by Nicholas Hutchinson, FSC.

For details:

<http://www.matthew-james.co.uk/>

Could make use of a search engine  
to research this topic further.

This material is part of  
the prayer and education website  
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