



BISHOP OF PORTSMOUTH

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H.E Cardinal Vincent Nichols
Archbishop's House
Ambrosden Avenue
London
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Dear Cardinal Vincent,

I write to you with the knowledge that I reflect here the feelings of everyone (clergy, laity and religious) in our Diocese of Portsmouth, in expressing to you our shock, our horror and our sadness at the terrible fire that engulfed Grenfell Tower in West London in your Archdiocese. Our deepest sympathy and our heartfelt prayers go to the residents of that tower block who were killed or injured and who have lost their homes in the disaster.

Today, Corpus Christi, I have offered Mass for the repose of the victims, for the recovery of the injured, and for all families and friends affected by this tragedy. I pray too that the Lord will assist with His grace the emergency services in their rescue work and grant comfort to all the bereaved. Please pass on sympathy and prayers from the Diocese of Portsmouth to the clergy and faithful of your Archdiocese and through you to the whole community in West London.

I will invite our Diocese not only to continue to remember you and all those involved in their prayers but also to do what they can to contribute practically to the support of those who have lost their homes and possessions, through the Catholic organisations engaged in relief work and especially through your Emergency Relief Fund.

At moments like this, where would we be without our faith and the knowledge that God is a loving God full of mercy and compassion? Let us turn to Him, praying and working for better ways of avoiding these sorts of tragedies in the future. One grace already is a new-found sense of local community and a generous collaboration in support of those in distress. May the Holy Spirit continue to breathe such new life into our whole society.

Please accept my fraternal prayers and support. May God bless you in all your tireless labours for the Lord and His Church.

In Corde Iesu

+Philip

Bishop of Portsmouth