

Press Release from the Diocese of Portsmouth

Friday May 12

For Immediate Release

Remember the protection of human life at the next General Election, bishop urges diocese

The Bishop of Portsmouth has urged members of his diocese to make attitudes to the sanctity of human life a crucial consideration in the forthcoming UK General Election.

In a pastoral letter to be read out in all churches across Portsmouth Diocese on Sunday, Bishop Philip Egan suggested ten questions that Catholics might ask prospective parliamentary candidates on topics including the environment, the family, the poor, sick and disabled and persecuted Christians.

In his letter, Bishop Egan writes: “Britain is preparing for a General Election and as Catholics we have a crucial contribution to make to this democratic process. Here are ten key questions to think about. You could use them to evaluate a manifesto, or you could put them to a prospective parliamentary candidate.

“First, and foremost, how far will this or that candidate protect the sacred dignity of each human life from conception to natural death, opposing moves to liberalise the abortion laws, to extend embryo experimentation and to legalise assisted suicide and euthanasia?”

The letter also addresses vocation and urges Catholics to make praying for priestly vocations a priority.

Bishop Egan writes: “There are a couple of things I want to ask you. First, to make prayer for vocations, especially to the priesthood, a central priority. In our Diocese, God is calling men to serve Him as priests. How are you helping them to hear His call? Are you praying for them, encouraging them, supporting them?”

“When was the last time your parish, your school, your family produced a priest? We are short of priests, but priests do not come out of thin air. They come from prayer and fasting. Please pray for more priests. Why not say the Rosary for this intention? Or offer up your Friday abstinence? Or if you watch a football match, ask God to call one of the players or one of the fans?”

The Bishop also encourages parishioners to ask: “What is God asking of me?” reminding them that they are Christ’s “missionary disciples.” He says: “He wants us to go out, sharing our faith with family, friends and all we meet. More, He wants us to be a creative minority in society, to transform the world. Drawing strength from Him in the Eucharist, He wants us to be agents of change, building a Kingdom of justice, truth and peace, serving the poor and needy.”

*The full pastoral letter is attached.
Ends here.*

For more information please contact Kirsten McGuire PA to Bishop Egan

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