

**BISHOPS' CONFERENCE OF
ENGLAND AND WALES**

Autumn 2019 Meeting

RESOLUTIONS

General Election Statement

Please see separate sheet.

The God who Speaks

The Catholic Bishops of England and Wales are delighted to work in partnership with the Bible Society on *The God who Speaks* initiative.

This encouragement to Catholics to read and engage with the Scriptures is in line with Pope Francis's recent Apostolic Letter *Aperuit Illis*, in which he says: "The relationship between the Risen Lord, the community of believers and sacred Scripture is essential to our identity as Christians".

As we begin this new liturgical year, we encourage Catholics to take part in this initiative and to draw daily on the treasures of Scripture. Reading the Bible, in families or as individuals, allows us to hear God speaking in our lives today.

Making the Bible available through word, art, drama and film enables wider access to the Scriptures. We are committed to breaking down barriers to the Word by creating different formats and contexts through which Catholics can engage with it.

God speaks through his Word, the Bible, and through the Word made flesh – Jesus Christ. Our desire is to see more Catholics discovering the beauty and significance of Scripture at all times and in all places.

This initiative is being formally launched in dioceses with a special celebration of Evening Prayer (Vespers) on Advent Sunday (1st December 2019) in the Cathedrals.

Rededication of England as the Dowry of Mary, 29 March 2020

The Bishops' Conference supports the Rededication of England as the Dowry of Mary, to be offered by every Catholic on 29 March 2020, and to include a suitable Service of Rededication to be held in each Cathedral on that date as a commitment to a renewed evangelisation.

Care in Time

The Bishops' Conference:

Welcomes the abridged version of *Care in Time* that has been received, and notes that the full version will be released publicly on 4 December 2019. New guidance for parishes on outreach to socially isolated older people called *Reaching Out* will also be published on this date;

St John Henry Newman – Proper Texts

The Bishops' Conference approves the proper Texts presented to the Bishops with the proposed amendments for use in the dioceses of England and Wales for the Feast of St John Henry Newman.

Patrimony Committee

The Bishops' Conference welcomes the advice of the Patrimony Committee that an updated fabric survey of all Catholic Cathedrals is to be undertaken. Such surveys will assist in making the case to Government for additional funding in support of the major works identified as a result of this exercise.

Further Statements

Catholic Education Service

National Inspection Framework

The Bishops' Conference approved the introduction of the National Framework for Inspection of all Catholic schools, colleges and academies. The National Framework for Inspection will be approved and revised from time to time by the Department for Education and Formation. This will include national recruitment, training and accreditation of inspectors. Training and accreditation of existing inspectors will begin in 2020 and the National Framework will have replaced existing diocesan frameworks in all dioceses by September 2021.'

Bishop Declan Lang, chair of the department for International Affairs of the Bishops' Conference of England and Wales

As Bishops of the Holy Land Coordination have consistently highlighted, we all have a responsibility to oppose the continued construction of illegal settlements, which not only fuels human rights violations, but imperils any chance of a two-state solution. We stand in solidarity with the Church in the Holy Land as it strives for justice and peace amid these increasingly difficult circumstances and look forward to reiterating this support in person during our forthcoming visit to Christian communities in Palestine.”