



CATHOLIC BISHOPS CONFERENCE
ENGLAND AND WALES

The General Election Message

A message from the Catholic Bishops of England and Wales



April 2010

Shortly we will be choosing our next Government. It is an important responsibility and all Catholics should use their vote.

There are questions to be asked about the party you are considering voting for, and about the particular candidate. This message sets out some of the considerations we should all have in mind when making those choices. As Bishops we are not advocating any particular political party. That is not our role.

There are limits to what any Government can do on its own. On their own, targets, rules and regulations cannot improve the quality of our shared life. People do that. They do it by choosing the common good rather than pure self interest. We are all responsible and we need to put our moral values to work in a spirit of neighbourliness and mutual support. That is what happens in a crisis, but we need to see it every day as well. We depend on each other. And we need a Government that draws out what is best in all of us, and which aims to serve the common good.

So the fundamental question we each need to ask ourselves in deciding who to vote for is not who will best serve me, but who will best serve the common good of all of us.

This is about restoring trust at the heart of our society: trust in each other and in our institutions to do the right thing by choice, not by constraint.

In early March 2010 we published a pamphlet 'Choosing the Common Good' which explores these ideas more fully. We encourage you to study and discuss it. It can be obtained from Alive Publishing or downloaded from catholicchurch.org.uk.

We have noted some specific issues and questions which we believe are particularly important- these are available on our website. We encourage you to ask Parliamentary candidates where they stand on these issues.

We also ask you to pray for God's guidance on the choices we all make, and for His guidance for our future Government and for all those who are called to serve society as Members of Parliament.

www.catholicchurch.org.uk

