



CATHOLIC DIOCESE OF ROCKHAMPTON

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8 September 2020

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ

Statement from Queensland Bishops – *The Common Good in a COVID World*

The Bishops of Queensland have issued a statement – *The Common Good in a COVID World*. This statement was released on September 7, 2020.

I write to each one of you to ask that you read, reflect and pray about the statement as it has been given to you as a resource leading up to the State Election on 31 October 2020.

It is a concern for me, as your Bishop, that many decisions are made in parliament that affect our lives and those of our fellow human beings.

The Queensland Parliament enacted the Termination of Pregnancy Bill in 2018, which is in opposition to Catholic teaching on life. I ask you to consider the statement from us, the Catholic Bishops of Queensland.

Over the four Sundays of September our focus is on the issues of life. These notes and prayers have been prepared by my Bishop's Advisory Panel on Sanctity of Life issues. I am grateful to Father Don White, Dr Ciara Ross and Michael Otto for their wisdom, scholarship and prayer as they have produced an excellent resource for you and your parish communities.

On Sunday 4 October, the Diocese of Rockhampton will release a Pastoral Statement. I ask all Catholics and Christians to dedicate this day to prayer for all life issues. In our planning, ensure a COVID safe prayer gathering.

Some of the ways you can join in prayer include:

- Prayer before the Blessed Sacrament
- Rosaries
- Prayer gatherings online (Zoom, Facebook etc)

I ask the whole Diocese to pray on Sunday 4 October and for our politicians to make pro-life decisions in our Parliament.

It is not good enough for us to stay silent. Our Catholic voice and our Catholic faith – pro-life – must be heard. To stay silent now does not resonate with being a Catholic or Christian.

Bishop Michael McCarthy

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Again, I ask you to contact your local member and candidate and make your Catholic views known. I also ask you to remember the unborn in your prayers – this is human life, like you, like me, created in the slip-stream of God's love.

We cannot afford to allow any more deaths of our people by our silence.

The Euthanasia debate may also soon be before us and for us who are moving towards the autumn years of life, I would hope that good palliative care will be in place so that all of us, including me, will be able to die with dignity. Euthanasia is not a Catholic teaching. Again, please do not be silent and have your views made known.

I gift you with this excellent formation material and I am asking our priests and sisters who are in leadership roles to assist you, and together we will begin to reclaim our Catholic and Christian faith as the marvellous gift we share and gives us hope.

You can find the statement and further information through our Diocesan website - <https://rok.catholic.net.au/queensland-bishops-release-statement-in-lead-up-to-election/>

May God bless you all.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Michael McCarthy". The signature is written in a cursive style with a cross at the beginning.

Most Rev Michael McCarthy
Bishop of Rockhampton