



CATHOLIC DIOCESE OF ROCKHAMPTON

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4 October 2020

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ

Sanctity of Life Sunday – Diocese of Rockhampton – SUNDAY 4TH OCTOBER 2020

For the past four weeks, our priests and parish communities have been placing before you key aspects of Catholic teaching on the issue of the Sanctity of Life.

This issue is close to my heart and this Sunday I place the issue of the Sanctity of Life before you again.

I ask you to discern in the weeks leading up to the election if the candidate you vote for in the election will uphold our Catholic stance of protecting and supporting human life, from its very beginning to its natural end.

As Catholics, we have been given a sacred obligation by God and a core responsibility to care for all human life. The beginning of life announces a miracle, when two cells are joined as God breathes life into them and a human being is formed in response to God. Human Life is sacred from the moment of conception and needs protecting from its very beginning.

As Catholics, dying naturally is central to our teaching and this includes the support of good palliative care - respecting life until a natural death. The Queensland Law Reform Commission has been considering Voluntary Assistant Dying (VAD or euthanasia) and its recommendations have been passed onto the Parliament for its future consideration by way of drafting legislation. The upcoming election does affect us all as Catholics. VAD is not within the teaching of the Catholic Church and as a Bishop of the Church, in union with the teaching of the College of Bishops and the Holy Father, I oppose any attempts to legalise this through legislation.

The second Vatican Council reaffirmed our opposition as Catholics to all 'offences against life itself, such as murder, genocide, abortion and euthanasia'. The Catholic Church teaches clearly, that all life is to be respected from its very being to its very end. The Catholic Church does support high quality palliative care and encourages governments to support all our people during this very vulnerable time of their life, when death is close and in some instances painful, to ensure that the dignity of the person is upheld.

It is not good enough to remain in silent opposition. Our Catholic voice is for life. Our Catholic faith is pro-life. We cannot opt out of this responsibility to proclaim the truth.

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Bishop Michael McCarthy

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I invite you over these next few weeks to visit and connect with all candidates and ask them what their views are, so that you are fully informed. It is important that you discern who will reflect the Catholic views on life, in resonance with the Catholic faith, within the next State Parliament.

May the God who gave us the gift of life support us to make courageous decisions for life and not allow us to be silent.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Michael McCarthy". The signature is written in a cursive style.

Most Rev Michael McCarthy
Bishop of Rockhampton