

NATIONALITY AND BORDERS BILL

Parliament is preparing to debate this new Bill. Our bishops are concerned about some proposals. They point out that our duty to welcome, promote, protect, and integrate refugees is the same, whether they have been selected for organised resettlement routes or forced to make difficult journeys to reach the UK. Catholic charities and parishioners working with those directly affected can speak from expertise and experience about specific areas of concern to the Church such as detention, asylum accommodation and family reunification.

They ask us to write to MPs about these matters, both now and during the further stages of the Bill's progress.

The Jesuit Refugee Service and the SVP have produced helpful briefing notes which are linked from the website of the diocesan Commission for Justice, Peace and the Integrity of Creation (<https://jpicssouthwark.org.uk/>).

Please take a look at them and try to communicate with your MP.

“Parliament in Your Parish”

CAFOD's “Reclaim Our Common Home” campaign asks politicians to seek new ways of thinking about the world. And, as we start to recover from Covid, to take an active part in renewing our troubled societies by embracing the universal values of solidarity and fraternity, avoiding discord and isolation.

Within this campaign parishes are invited to organise virtual meetings with local MP(s) to get to know them and discuss matters such as (a) how to rebuild from the pandemic, (b) addressing the need for real progress on climate change, and (c) the cancellation of unjust foreign debts for low and middle-income countries.

Pope Francis talks about a better kind of politics, with more effort to discern ways ahead and less confrontation. This should be the style of these meetings.

This year, having hosted the June G7 meeting in Cornwall, and as host to the next UN climate “COP26” gathering in Glasgow in November, the UK has great opportunities to exercise global leadership and work for the good of all peoples.

The Parish Council agreed at its May meeting that it will be good to organise such a meeting – or perhaps two meetings because the parish is largely divided between the Dartford West and Sevenoaks constituencies.

Now that the G7 meeting is over, we need a few people to get together and decide upon the best way to go ahead locally and arrange a meeting in September. If you can join the parish team or if you would like to find out more, please contact Phil Kerton (☎ 873802) or send an email message to the parish office to be forwarded

There are excellent resources available to help in planning and running these exercises, in particular at -

<https://cafod.org.uk/Campaign/Campaign-with-us/Parliament-in-your-parish>

