

# UK GENERAL ELECTION 2024

## The pursuit of the common good

The UK General Election of 4<sup>th</sup> July gives us the opportunity to look at the state of our society and reflect on what we can do to contribute to the common good. It is not a useless exercise. An authentic interest for self-realization, so present in our culture, cannot be detached from a genuine interest for the human flourishing of those who live in our neighbourhood, walk our streets and work with us.

As the English poet T. S. Eliot once said: “What life have you if you have not life together? There is no life that is not in community”. **The epidemic of loneliness** that we are all experiencing in our society, especially among young people, and the **growing polarisation** in public debates, call for an urgent renewal of a sense of community that our country is losing.

If we look at the newspapers and TV debates, the General Election discussion at the moment seems to be: “Vote for the X party if you are angry at the Y party”; “Vote for the Y party if you are angry at the migrants”; “Vote for the Z party if you are angry with both the Y party and the migrants”. It seems to us that **we need to move from a politics of anger and self-affirmation to a politics of construction**, centred on the pursuit of the *common good*.

A fruitful discussion about the common good presupposes the acknowledgement of something given, that all humans have in common. “**Every human person possesses an infinite dignity**, inalienably grounded in his or her very being, which prevails in and beyond every circumstance, state, or situation the person may ever encounter. This principle is fully recognizable even by reason alone... It is essential to point out that dignity is not something granted to the person by others based on their gifts or qualities, such that it could be withdrawn... Instead, dignity is intrinsic to the person: it is not conferred subsequently, it is prior to any recognition, and it cannot be lost. All human beings possess this same intrinsic dignity, regardless of whether or not they can express it in a suitable manner” (Vatican Dicastery of the Doctrine of Faith, *Dignitas Infinita*, 1, 15).

**We believe that this concept of human dignity should inform every policy:** from education to economics, from immigration to social care and healthcare.

The Catholic Church in this country, while being a minority, has always been the voice of those who stand for the tireless pursuit of the common good and the defence of the infinite value of each person. Recently the Catholic Bishops’ Conference of England and Wales has published **a series of online resources that can help us** navigate this election time. We invite you to read it here: <https://www.cbcew.org.uk/election24/>.

We seek out politicians that not only desire the common good, but that are willing to create a climate in which others can contribute towards building, through their own initiatives, a society where the infinite dignity of every human person is acknowledged and served. This is a work that goes beyond 4<sup>th</sup> July and **we are willing to contribute to it by continuing to build spaces where this vision can be embodied**.

**Communion and Liberation**

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