YOUR VOTE YOUR VALUES – STATEMENT FROM THE CATHOLIC BISHOPS ON THE VICTORIAN ELECTION

Victoria’s Catholic bishops have issued a statement encouraging voters to vote for candidates who understand and will work for the common good.

The 2006 census showed there were more than 1.3 million Catholics in Victoria. More than one million of these will be eligible to vote in November.

For the first time in a Victorian State Election, the Archbishop of Melbourne and the Bishops of Ballarat, Sandhurst and Sale have prepared a powerful pre-election document to guide Catholics as they consider how they will vote.

In the nearly 2000 word document, Your Vote Your Values, the Catholic bishops urge Victoria’s catholics to question their local candidates on a wide range of important issues before deciding for which candidate to vote.

Choosing the government is an important responsibility. The bishops urge Catholics to vote for the candidate that shares their values.

Your Vote Your Values has been circulated to Catholic schools and parishes throughout Victoria. The document is available on all Victorian diocesan websites.

The bishops are not advocating any political party. They have raised issues and questions to help inform voters on important issues for the future.

Catholics are encouraged to put specific questions and issues to candidates in the areas of Families, Life, Education, Health and Aged Care, Criminal Justice, Drugs and Alcohol and Religious Freedom.

Questions ask for commitments of candidates in relation to euthanasia, respect for rights of conscience, support for expectant and new mothers, abortion, homelessness targets, funding for schools, support for people with disabilities, for people with mental illness, increasing opportunities for rehabilitation in the criminal justice system, crime prevention, the defence of religious freedom and the rights of religious organisations.

Your Vote Your Values is signed by Archbishop Denis Hart of Melbourne, Bishop Peter Connors of Ballarat, Bishop Joe Grech of Bendigo (Sandhurst Diocese) and Bishop Christopher Prowse of Sale.

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