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Rebecca Long Bailey MP
House of Commons
London
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Sent by email only to: rebecca.longbailey.mp@parliament.uk

20 March 2020

Dear Ms Long Bailey,

Congratulations on making it through to this stage of the Labour leadership contest.

I'm writing to make you aware of the priorities of the Catholic Union's members and supporters. The Catholic Union is a membership organisation, which represents the views and interests of the Catholic laity in Britain.

This is a crucial election, not just for the Labour party but for the country. The next leader will have the task of holding this Government to account and, in due course, providing an alternative vision for the country at election time.

The 4.5 million Catholics in Britain are watching this contest carefully. The new Labour leader has an opportunity to reach out to people from faith communities, including Catholics, and build a party that respects different views and beliefs.

I hope you would want to engage with faith groups if elected leader next month. The Catholic Union is willing to work with you, and all politicians, to help bring about the common good. The tradition of Catholic Social Teaching has been a source of inspiration to the Labour movement in the past and has much to offer the future direction of the party.

We have set out some policy objectives below, which are of concern to many people across the country, including Catholics. I hope you will feel able to support these and commit to implementing them if you're elected leader.

- **Campaign for a tax system that supports marriage and family life by committing to scrap the two-child cap on tax credits and universal credit.**
- **Encourage EU citizens to stay and continue their lives in this country by supporting an immigration policy that values the contribution made by people from Europe to our economy and communities.**
- **Promote religious freedom around the world by holding the Government to account for its commitment to implement the recommendations of the Truro Report.**
- **Respect freedom of conscience by guaranteeing the practice of allowing free votes on moral issues in Parliament.**
- **Uphold diversity in education by supporting the opening of new Catholic free schools - currently made impossible by the faith-based admissions cap. Catholic schools are amongst some of the most diverse in the country.**

The Catholic Union of Great Britain: The Voice of Catholics in Public Life

President: Sir Edward Leigh, MP

Vice-Presidents: Professor Lord Alton of Liverpool, Baroness Morris of Bolton OBE, Lord Clarke of Hampstead CBE, KSG,
Mr Jonathan Evans MP, Mr Robert Ffello, Professor John Haldane, Baroness Hollins, Dr Terence Morris,
Mr John Deighan KSG, Mr Leo Simmonds KCSG

I would be grateful if you could let me know whether you support these objectives. I have also written to the other leadership candidates with the same request.

We will make the responses we receive available to our members and supporters through our website and weekly newsletter, to help inform the contest.

I look forward to hearing from you.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Nigel Parker', with a large, sweeping flourish underneath.

Nigel Parker

Catholic Union Director

Email: director@catholicunion.org.uk

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