



Meeting with Saqib Bhatti MP

28 July 2020

Mgr McHugh was approached recently by Saqib Bhatti's office to talk about his work in regenerating communities.

Mr Bhatti is particularly interested in initiatives involving regeneration, opportunity and education, and also making connections with the Catholic community in his Meriden constituency which takes in the rural villages around Solihull and Coventry, and Castle Bromwich/Kingshurst/Smith's Wood/Chelmsley. He was interested in hearing about the work of Parishes, Schools and SVP groups in the constituency and possibly visiting them.

Mgr McHugh took the opportunity to explain his new responsibility in the Archdiocese for Co-ordinating Ethnic Chaplaincies, Eparchies and Missions. He asked Mr Bhatti to consider the needs of Catholic Ethnic Communities when it comes to work on the Immigration Bill, where the focus will be on people being admitted who have the skills needed for the economy in Britain, saying we need priests and sisters to be admitted to the UK because their special skills are needed by ethnic communities and the Church and the society more broadly.



While talking about the great work Parishes and Schools are doing in the community in many ways: building social cohesion and caring for the vulnerable (for example through supporting the lonely and sick and donating to foodbanks);

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Co-ordinator for Ethnic Chaplaincies in the Archdiocese



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he emphasised that parishes and especially Catholic ethnic communities need the dedication and caring that priests and sisters bring from abroad. The new Immigration Bill should make allowance for this as it is being drafted; there are different ways to benefit the economy and one is to have communities supported in reaching out to care for others.

Speaking of his experience as a new MP following the 2019 election, Mr Bhatti said what a shock to the system COVID-19 had been: coming in to deal with Brexit and ending up with a Pandemic. Talking about the impact it had on his work, with thousands of emails coming in all the time and totally changing the workload of his office, it was evident, everyone had to adapt to an entirely new environment.

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