AUSTRALIAN CATHOLIC BISHOPS CONFERENCE

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Catholic Bishops offer prayers, congratulations to incoming Labor Govt

The Australian Catholic Bishops today offered their prayers and congratulations to Kevin Rudd and the Australian Labor Party on their victory in the Federal Election.

The Bishops, meeting together in Sydney, urged the incoming government to reward the faith of the electorate with a commitment to governing in the interests of the common good.

President of the Australian Catholic Bishops Conference, Archbishop Philip Wilson, said while Catholics would have voted for candidates from across the political spectrum, the result shows that there was a clear mood for change within the electorate at large.

"At moments of historic change in the nation, we can do well to take a moment to stop and reflect on where this change will carry us," Archbishop Wilson said.

"It is our hope, and the hope of many, that the Rudd Labor Government will grasp the opportunity to pursue policies which integrate the pursuit of economic prosperity with social justice and an overriding concern for life and the human dignity of all Australians.

"The measure of this will be particularly evident in policies which affect the most vulnerable, including our indigenous brothers and sisters, refugees and asylum seekers, people with disability and their carers, and vulnerable employees in the workplace.

"Gathered together in our Plenary Meeting, we will pray for Mr Rudd and for his colleagues, that the new government will be guided by wisdom, justice and integrity."

The Bishops also paid tribute to outgoing prime minister John Howard, for his long and dedicated service to public life in Australia.

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