



**Right Reverend Patrick Joseph McKinney**

**Bishop of Nottingham**

## **Pastoral Letter for Education Sunday 2023**

**appointed to be read at Sunday Masses celebrated in the Diocese of Nottingham  
on Saturday 9<sup>th</sup> and Sunday 10<sup>th</sup> September 2023**

Dear brothers and sisters in Christ,

This Sunday, 10<sup>th</sup> September, marks the 175<sup>th</sup> celebration of Education Sunday for the Church in England and Wales. Education Sunday, coinciding with the beginning of the academic year, provides our Catholic community with the opportunity to celebrate the vital work of education that our schools carry out. It also gives me an occasion, on behalf of us all, to acknowledge the sterling work and commitment of thousands of teachers, support staff, governors, and directors, alongside our Diocesan Education Service. They all play such a crucial role in making our Catholic schools among the most successful in the country.

Here in our diocese, it is now five years since the creation of our Catholic Multi-Academy Trusts. During this time, working always in collaboration with our Diocesan Education Service, the Trusts have provided a sense of structure, support, and stability for our schools. I know that this close partnership between the schools in the Trusts was particularly welcome during the challenges of the Covid pandemic. It has also helped to underpin the distinctive nature of our Catholic schools: as places to assist parents in the education and religious formation of their children, where Christ and the teachings of the Catholic Church are at the heart of everything, and where each young person is treasured and encouraged to achieve their full potential.

Over those years I have used my Pastoral Letters on Education to appeal for volunteers from our parish communities to act as both foundation directors and foundation governors. I would like to repeat this request today. The roles of foundation directors and governors are different, but both are very important. Each of them play a part in helping me, as diocesan bishop, to ensure that our Trusts and schools remain faithful to the mission of the Church, and that they are governed effectively.

Foundation directors sit on the Board of each Catholic Multi-Academy Trust; they are company directors and must act in accordance with both company and charity law, in addition to Church Law. Here, I would welcome applications from parishioners who have a suitable background in areas such as finance, law, personnel, marketing, and education. Each of our schools also has a local governing body which is responsible for Catholic Life and academic standards, and foundation governors also ensure that school and parish links remain strong. This role is not solely for those who have a