[Name of your MP]

House of Commons

London

SW1A 0AA

Dear [name of your MP]

The Catholic community of England and Wales are acutely aware of the impact of the cost-of-living crisis up and down the country. It is having a devastating effect on families, pushing many deeper into poverty and leading many others to struggle with day-to-day living costs.

We know from news reports and from our local experience, as well as from the experience of Catholic charities, that it is not an exaggeration to say that some families are having to choose between “heating and eating”. This situation will not improve soon, and it will almost certainly worsen during the winter months.

Catholic Social Teaching tells us that, when there is urgent and dire need, justice requires that this is addressed as a priority. Following the example of the Bishops’ Conference Department for Social Justice briefing paper published on 5 September 2022, we urge you to press the government to:

* Ensure that the uprating of benefits in line with inflation announced by the Chancellor in the Autumn Statement are effective immediately, not in April 2023.
* Remove the two-child cap on universal credit payments or, at the very least, suspend it pending a review of its impact.
* Reform the tax system so that it better recognises family, child-rearing and other caring responsibilities.
* Reverse the decision in the Autumn Statement to delay the introduction of the social care reforms, a key manifesto pledge of the government.

We urge you to work with all the political parties on a vision for a poverty-free country, with effective safety nets so that the most vulnerable can build decent and dignified lives. We urge you to commit to a vision for the common good, so that all people in our country can flourish, participate in society and live a fully human life.

The Catholic community continues to work at the grassroots with the most vulnerable and disadvantaged people in our society. The efforts of the faith and voluntary sector, however, are not sufficient to meet the current needs, nor is it our sole responsibility. We believe that a key role of government is the realisation of the common good.

Thank you for your time in considering this request. I look forward to hearing your views on this urgent matter.

Your sincerely,