
UK: Mgr McAleenan (English Bishops), message on reception of migrants. “Rwanda Bill undermines human life”

“I was moved to hear the stories of the asylum seekers I met during my visit to the Bibby Stockholm barge. Their experiences are often traumatic, but the desire of these people to find a home in the UK and belong to a society to which they can contribute is a testament to our shared humanity”. Thus begins the message that Bishop Paul McAleenan, spokesperson on migration for the Catholic Bishops' Conference of England and Wales, released to mark Refugee Week, taking place from 17 to 23 June. His reflection focuses on three themes. The Bishop’s experience on board the Bibby Stockholm barge, moored off Portland Harbour and equipped as a detention centre, which he visited in late April. The approval of the so-called “Rwanda Bill,” the controversial legislation launched two years ago by British Prime Minister Boris Johnson, which will allow the UK to deport hundreds of asylum seekers to the African country. And societal attitudes towards refugees and migrants. “I recall the wonderful work of Catholic communities across England and Wales, who have welcomed migrants in the last few years”, Bishop McAleenan wrote. “I believe that the Rwanda Bill undermines the dignity of human life and that it is an unjustifiable policy that has created an unnecessary sense of fear and anxiety in asylum seekers”.

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