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THE BISHOP OF COVENTRY

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4th September 2017

The Most Reverend Bernard Longley
Archbishop of Birmingham
Archbishop's House
8 Shadwell Street
Birmingham, B4 6EY

Dear Archbishop Bernard,

I am writing to say how sad I was to hear that Cardinal Cormac Murphy-O'Connor has died, and to convey my sympathies, and those of the Diocese of Coventry, to you and to your Archdiocese.

I held the Cardinal in high esteem, respecting him greatly for his place in public life as Cardinal Archbishop and very much appreciating his work as Co-Chair of ARCIC. I also had a very real personal affection for him. I think I may have told you that when I served with Father Robert Hamilton CJ, in a thriving ecumenical chaplaincy at Royal Holloway, University of London, I felt that the-then Bishop Cormac was one of my bishops. Robert, I think, may have felt something similar with regard to the Bishop of Guildford, at least when he was playing for our diocesan cricket team!

I since met the Cardinal on many other occasions. A particularly convivial one was when I sat next to him at the farewell to Archbishop Rowan Williams at the kind invitation of the present Cardinal Archbishop around the table that, I imagine, would have once been his own. I heard some wonderful stories told with characteristic humour!

I am copying this letter to Cardinal Vincent to express my sympathies nationally and to Father Tom Farrell to convey them more locally to the Coventry Deanery.

With my condolences to you and all your people, and also my thanksgiving for the faithful life and witness of a very special servant of the Lord

As ever in Christ,

Yours
+ Christopher

cc Cardinal Vincent Nichols
Father Tom Farrell