



CATHOLIC BISHOPS' CONFERENCE OF ENGLAND AND WALES
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CATHOLIC BISHOPS' CONFERENCE OF ENGLAND AND WALES
DEPARTMENT FOR EDUCATION AND FORMATION

Statement on the 175th Anniversary of the Foundation of St Mary's University

On behalf of the Bishops of England and Wales, I congratulate St Mary's University as it celebrates the 175th anniversary of its foundation.

The four Catholic universities in England and Wales were founded to educate teachers to ensure that those most in need in our society could have a Catholic education. In the modern age, guided by St John Henry Newman's 'Idea of a University', and taking Pope Francis's words to heart, they offer a great variety of programmes and have become known for always putting the student at the centre of their endeavours and preparing them to promote the common good.

As St Mary's continues to mark this anniversary year, we would especially like to note its success in promoting high-quality research, its engagement with the Catholic community and its support for the development of the Mater Ecclesiae College, an institution based at St Mary's conferring ecclesiastical degrees. We pray for the success of its School of Medicine, currently in development and expected to open in 2026. This will continue the work of the university of providing a high-quality education in areas of great social need.

Finally, we assure the staff and students of our four Catholic universities of our prayers at this difficult time for the higher education sector.

Rt Rev Marcus Stock, Bishop of Leeds
Chairman, Department for Catholic Education and Formation

7th May 2025