# What Is Advocacy?

‘And whatever you do, in word or deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him.’

Colossians 13: 17

Advocacy involves speaking to the government and trying to make them aware about an important situation, either in this country or abroad. Normally, these are bad situations which organisations and charities try to get the government to help with.

With Aid to the Church in Need, we do advocacy work to make the government aware of Christians suffering persecution in some of the worst places in the world.

We try to get the government to help them, by giving them money or working with foreign governments to take the suffering Christians out of bad situations and improve their lives.

# 1. 5 Reasons to do ‘ADVOCACY’

1. It helps the people who need it most
2. It makes government and members of parliament aware of the very bad problem of Christian persecution
3. Many people want to help us in our work, and if they can’t afford to give money, they can help us with advocacy by doing things like writing letters
4. Many priests and bishops in countries experiencing persecution ask us for help with advocacy
5. It helps persecution Christians feel like they have a voice, and they aren’t suffering in a vacuum

# 2. How to Write a GREAT Advocacy Letter

Here are some tips about how to write a great advocacy letter to a member of the Scottish Parliament:

* First and foremost, begin with the request
* Then explain more about the charity or organisation you’re writing on behalf of
* Then tell them more about the problem
* Then explain why they’re in a strong position to help, and why their help is so important
* End by thanking them for the time they spent reading your letter

# 3. Example Letter (to the Scottish Parliament)

Humza Yousaf

The Scottish Parliament

Edinburgh

EH99 1SP 11th March 2024

Dear Mr Yousaf,

I’m writing today to ask you to meet with representatives from the charity Aid to the Church in Need (ACN), to find out more about Christian persecution around the world and the ways in which the Scottish Parliament can help them to suffer less.

Aid to the Church in Need is a Catholic charity committed to the cause of religious freedom and which funds over 5,000 projects in 140 countries every year, helping persecuted and other suffering Christians wherever they’re in the most need.

According to ACN’s most recent Religious Freedom in the World report, more than half of the global population lives in a country in which people are persecuted for their religious beliefs. Those countries are home to more than 4 billion people and make up about 51.6 per cent of the global population. The “red” category includes the two most populous countries in the world, China and India, which the report found to be among the worst religious persecutors.

Scotland has a big presence on the world stage, and is in a very strong position to help those suffering for their faith. I encourage you to meet with ACN, to hear more about the work they do, and to discuss the ways in which the Scottish Government can help their work; both at home and abroad.

Thank you very much for your time reading this letter, and I look forward to hearing back soon.

Yours Sincerely,

4. Catholic Self-Evaluation Document - Evidence

Through using this ‘Advocacy’ resource, school leaders will be able to provide evidence to support judgements in the following aspects of the Catholic Self-Evaluation Document (CSED):

Catholic Life and Mission (CLM)

Outcomes

CLM 1.3 Moral Development

CLM 1.4 Catholic Social Teaching

CLM 1.5 Respect for Self and Others

Leadership

CLM 3.5 Commitment to Catholic Social Teaching

Religious Education (RE)

Outcomes

RE1.1 Development of Knowledge, Understanding and Skills

RE 1.3 Religious Literacy

RE 1.7 Engagement

RE 1.8 Enjoyment

Provision

RE 2.1 Subject and Pedagogical Knowledge

RE 2.6 Spiritual and Moral Development

RE 2.7 Variety and Resources

Leadership

RE 3.1 RED

RE 3.5 Curriculum Design

RE 3.7 Enrichment

5. ‘To Know You More Clearly’: The Religious Education Directory

Knowledge Lenses

The Religious Education Directory (RED) identifies six knowledge lenses which detail what should be known by the end of each age-phase. This resource can support teachers in helping to evidence expected outcomes in the ‘Hear, Believe, Celebrate and Live’ knowledge lenses.

Ways of Knowing

The RED identifies three ‘ways of knowing’ in its Programme of Study that enable skills to be developed at an appropriate level. The development of these aspects allows each knowledge lens to be explored appropriately. The ways of knowing are Understand (U), Discern (D) and Respond (R).

End of phase Age-Related Expectations, that could be linked to this resource are listed below.

Age 7 - 9

D3.1.2. Thinking about how all people should be treated equally.

R3.1.1. Making connections between experiences where people have not been treated equally and how this felt.

R.4.3.1. Reflecting on those that society excludes today and consider how they could show love for these people as Jesus did.

R.4.3.2. Considering how Jesus serves others and discuss how Christians can follow this example today. What could this mean for their lives and the lives of their local communities?

R.4.4.1. Reflecting on how the life and work of a person or organisation (historical or contemporary) lives out the works of mercy and/or the love for those oppressed by poverty and the inspiration they offer for their life.

R.4.5.3. Reflecting on how Christian communities continue the work of Jesus in the community where they live.

Age 9 - 11

R5.1.3. Discussing what loving our neighbour means for Christians today, for example, welcoming asylum seekers and refugees. Express a point of view and give reasons relating to the Church’s teaching on the common good and love of neighbour.

R5.3.4. Reflecting on how the communities they are part of could be transformed if everyone chose to love their neighbour as themselves.

R5.5.2 Reflecting on how they can use their gifts to make a better world.

R6.1.1. Considering they ways in which their life and the life of their communities could be transformed by taking seriously the belief in the innate dignity and equality of all human beings.

R6.4.2. Considering how love of neighbour could transform their life and the lives of the communities they are part of, describing the actions they could take to begin this transformation.

R6.5.3. Reflecting on how the work of charities can support people facing injustice or persecution.

U6.5.6. Describe how one charity studied witnesses its Christian faith through its work.

U6.6.1. Explain in an age-appropriate way the meaning of ‘the common good’ and the principles of Catholic Social Teaching.

D6.6.1. Reflecting on the statement “Everyone should be concerned to create and support institutions that improve the conditions of human life” (CCC 1926). Consider how this challenges people to change.