

Rt Rev Ralph Heskett CSsR
Bishop's House,
75, Norfolk Road,
Sheffield, South Yorkshire, S2 2SZ
bishop@hallam-diocese.com

Dear Rt Rev Ralph Heskett,

As a member of the Polish Catholic community in Barnsley and Chesterfield I am asking you to support our efforts to make the churches in Barnsley and Chesterfield available again to celebrate Mass in Polish language. Unfortunately, father Leszek Seweryn's requests (parish priest of the Polish Catholic Mission in Sheffield, Barnsley and Chesterfield) sent to fathers Adrian Tomlinson and Damian Humphries did not receive a positive response and they still refuse to rent churches to the Polish community.

For many years we have been celebrating Mass at the Holy Rood churches in Barnsley and The Annunciation in Chesterfield and worshipping God as best we can - that is, in our mother tongue. Although our lives are slowly returning to normal and many congregations can meet in churches again, unfortunately for us such this possibility does not exist. For many of us, for various reasons, it is not possible to attend Mass in Polish language in Sheffield.

We do not agree with the opinion of the parish priests in Barnsley and Chesterfield that the masses in Polish divide the Catholic community. Participation in the Holy Mass in Polish is not a sign of division and isolation. Many Poles are very involved in the initiatives of the Catholic community in Barnsley and Chesterfield. Limiting in such a significant way the possibility of participating in the mass in the language in which we naturally worship God will not result in integration with the English community, but the departure of the people from the Catholic Church. Let's build bridges, not set up barriers.

We sincerely hope that our appeal will meet with a positive response you and will honour the provisions of the Code of Canon Law and the agreement between the Episcopates in Poland and England and Wales regarding the activities of the Polish Catholic Mission in England and Wales.

Yours sincerely in Christ.

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Date

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Signature