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Cardinal Nichols celebrates Mass to commemorate Great Dock Strike

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A Mass to commemorate the 125th anniversary of the Great Dock Strike and to give thanks for the work of Cardinal Manning in helping to bring the strike to an end was celebrated on 14 September at St Mary and St Michael Catholic Church, Commercial Road in East London.

Organised by Caritas Anchor House, the Mass and reception which followed were a celebration of the legacy of Cardinal Henry Manning and his role in bringing the strike to an end. The Mass commemorates the 'Cardinal's Peace', which was signed on 14 September 1889 in a local school in Poplar.

Cardinal Vincent Nichols was principal celebrant. He was joined by Mgr John Armitage, Vicar General for Brentwood, and Mgr Martin Hayes, Vicar General for Westminster, and priests and the faithful from both dioceses, as well as guests from other faith traditions.

In his homily, Cardinal Vincent referred to Cardinal Manning as "the one who set out the principles and values on which that settlement was achieved."

Looking back to an earlier speech which Cardinal Manning had made in 1874, and in which he anticipated all the arguments of Catholic Social Teaching, Cardinal Vincent said: "For a person's work, their labour, he claimed the same rights as those given to a person's property, calling that work 'capital in the truest sense'. In addition he argued that it was the duty of every employer to recognise the crucial importance of a worker's family life and indeed their need for rest."

Speaking about the dignity of work, Cardinal Vincent said: "The ways in which we come together, in the activities which make up our life in society, are of course the testing grounds of the practical acknowledgment of this dignity and of how we work together for a common good that excludes nobody. What the Great Dock Strike helped to establish was that recognition of this dignity was shockingly lacking in the patterns of employment in force in the London docks at that time, and, I may add as a person from Liverpool, not only in London."

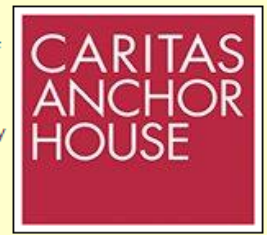
He went on to say: "Catholic Social Teaching continues to develop these fundamental principles of the priority of human dignity and the importance of the common good, across a wide spectrum of concerns."

At the reception which followed, several guests paid tribute Cardinal Manning and the legacy of Catholic Social Teaching. Among them, were Labour Peer Baron Glasman, GMB President Kevin Flanagan, and Chief Executive of Citizens UK Neil Jameson. They were also joined by Jane Jeffrey and Catherine Whittaker from Unite.

Source: *Archbishops House*

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