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NZ Catholic bishops refute claims they have endorsed a political party

New Zealand's Catholic bishops are seriously concerned by a false statement circulating widely online that claims they are urging Catholics to vote for the New Conservative political party.

The bishops have reported the false statement to the Electoral Commission, and told all parishes and the New Conservative Party that it is false.

Cardinal John Dew, vice-president of the NZ Catholic Bishops Conference, said the Catholic Bishops of Aotearoa New Zealand have not endorsed and will not endorse any political party.

“We are in the final stages of preparing our triennial Election Statement for distribution,” said Cardinal Dew, who is Metropolitan Archbishop of Wellington. “Our Election Statement will specifically say that it is not our role as bishops to tell people who to vote for.”

Cardinal Dew said that all claims in the circulating statement are false.

“I am particularly concerned that this false statement purports to say some of these fabrications were made in the name of an employee of a Church entity who is named in the document. That is truly appalling.

“We have been told by a representative of the New Conservative Party that they do not know who is behind the false statement, and we accept that,” Cardinal Dew said.

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