



ween rich and poor after members heard of the 'scandal' of inequality.

The Church of England’s national assembly approved a Leeds Diocesan Motion calling on all political parties to adopt an ‘explicit policy’ of reducing the gap between rich and poor.

Synod members further voted to redouble efforts by the Church of England both at national and local level to respond to need through social action and to tackle ‘unjust structures’ that contribute to the wealth gap.

Speaking to the General Synod, Father Paul Cartwright, from the Diocese of Leeds, said living costs were rising and real terms disposable income decreasing for the poorest families.

“We cannot expect to be able to write social or fiscal policy on behalf of Her Majesty’s Government, or even eradicate the wealth gap,” he said.

“But what we can be is that genuine voice which speaks about the injustice of such a gap, a gap that leads to reduced opportunity for so many in our country.”

“We can hold up the mirror to those who maybe can’t see what’s staring them in the face.”

Stephen Cottrell, Archbishop of York, told the Synod: “We make no apology for having a big vision of the worth of every human being.

“We make no apology for holding ourselves and others to account for this scandal which I now see so clearly in the communities I am privileged to serve.”

Revd Alex Frost, a priest in Burnley, Lancashire, whose work raising awareness of food poverty received widespread publicity last year, told Synod members that it was the job of Christians to ‘tell the story’ of those living in poverty.

“It is our job to bring the voice of the homeless and those in poverty to people who don’t know,” he said.

The Leeds Diocesan Motion was approved by 342 members with three recorded abstentions and two objections.

More information

The full wording, as amended, is as follows: ‘That this Synod (a) recommit to working both nationally and locally to respond to human need by loving service, and to transform unjust structures of society which are creating the wealth gap; and (b) call on Her Majesty’s Government (and all political parties) to adopt an explicit policy of reducing the wealth gap between the rich and the poor and the disadvantages that flow from it.’