Alive in Faith

Building a Sure Foundation for the Mission of Our Diocese



Parishioners' Support is a Great Inspiration

Over the past ten months, 15 parishes across our Diocese have given of their time, talent and treasure to support an unprecedented initiative. Truly reflecting the important principles of Catholic stewardship, these clergy and parishioners have served as encouragement to the additional 10 parishes that have recently commenced ***Alive in Faith***. During the months ahead, I look forward to the remaining 25 parishes joining this special endeavour.

This is our first ***Alive in Faith*** newsletter. We are pleased to be keeping you informed about what is happening. This is also an opportunity for me to express my gratitude, once again, to those who have made a personal commitment to ***Alive in Faith***. With your on-going generosity, and that of others, we are ensuring that we can build a strong foundation for the life and mission of our Catholic community in East Anglia and strengthen the witness of our parishes even more.

We are making tremendous progress but there is still some way to go. For parishes actively fundraising now, be assured of my support and prayers for your success. For those yet to undertake ***Alive in Faith***, I ask you to be willing to learn more and listen with an open mind and heart when your parish commences its campaign.

With all good wishes,

The Rt Rev Alan S Hopes
Bishop of East Anglia

Alive in Faith is focused on strengthening and sustaining our Church for this and future generations. It is committed to:

- providing support to clergy in both formation and retirement
- ensuring vibrant parishes
- supporting those on the margins through social outreach

Acknowledging the generosity of parishioners over the past years and decades, we still need additional funds to ensure a solid and strong Catholic community - one alive and hopeful in our faith and ability to live the Gospel.

Key Highlights

15
parishes have led the way

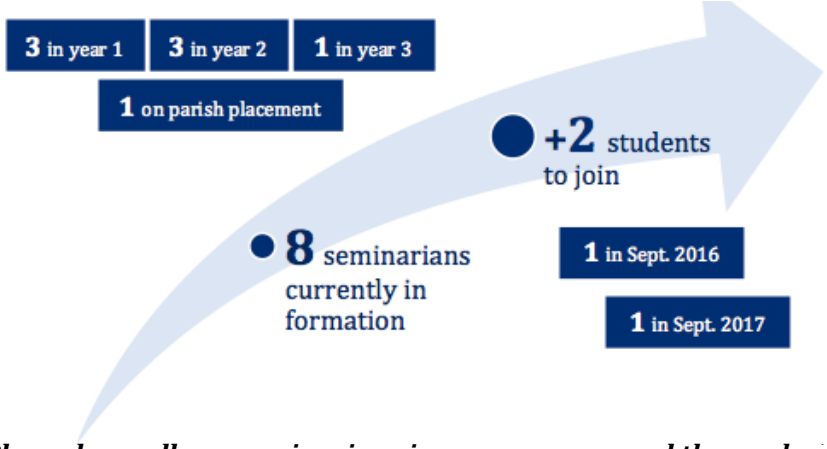
10
more parishes are playing their part now

3,000
households have learnt about our key priorities in a personal way

Training Our Future Priests

Over recent years, the Lord has blessed our Diocese with an abundance of seminarians. Only 12 years ago, there were no students in formation for East Anglia. Now we have 10, plus 10 'nibblers' who are considering joining the priesthood. Each of these men is answering God's call to serve.

God willing, four seminarians will be in our parishes by summer 2019. One is currently on a parish placement and three are at the Beda College in Rome. The Beda trains mature students and the course is shorter – four years. Thanks to your ongoing generosity, we will be able to fully train them for the remainder of their course.



Please keep all our seminarians in your prayers, and those who are considering joining the priesthood.

Parish Spotlight – St Luke's, Peterborough

Like many parishes across East Anglia, St Luke's has committed parishioners of all ages, nationalities and cultures contributing to the life of the Church in Peterborough. The Catholic community is thankful for everything it has. In the 1980s it was blessed with a new church. At the time, it was impossible for them to cover all the costs.

The parish has never forgotten the generosity of the Diocese and the parishioners who helped to ensure the faith could continue on in Peterborough. Now, St Luke's would like to repay the Diocese for their kindness. The portion of funds that it would have kept for a parish project will instead be used to support the two other key pillars of ***Alive in Faith***: priests and social outreach.

There was a great response to this plan and the vision for the Diocese, with almost half the parish committing over £130,000 (144% of their initial goal) for ***Alive in Faith***.

> Fr John Minh with some of his Alive in Faith volunteer team

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Supporting Our Retiring Priests After Many Years of Service



We owe a lot to our priests who dedicate their lives to 'shepherd the flock of God' (1 Peter). Some have ministered for 40-50 years, presiding over hundreds of weddings, funerals and baptisms. From 2015 to 2026, we will see the highest number of priests reaching the age of 75 than any other comparable time period in the history of our Diocese.

"Be close to your priests with affection and with your prayers, that they may always be shepherds according to God's heart." - Pope Francis

We are duty bound to support our priests in their elderly years. Many will need a place to live, often near a community they have served so that they can be close to their friends and brother priests. With your on-going generosity we will be able to fully support those who will retire in the immediate future, plus many more in the years ahead.

Putting Our Faith in to Action



As Christians we are called to respond to all the needs of our brothers and sisters. Those who are vulnerable and on the margins require the greatest support.

In 2012, the homeless charity Shelter, revealed that the number of people across East Anglia contacting its helpline had more than doubled in three years. Rising rents, increasing living costs and static wages mean more and more families are struggling to keep up with payments and are at risk of losing their homes.

Supporting the homeless is a key social outreach priority across our Diocese. Many parishes are actively involved in providing accommodation and services to those on the streets:

- Canaan Christian Centre, Sheringham and Cromer – run by the St Vincent de Paul Society and offers refuge to seven people, on average, at any one time
- Open Door, Newmarket – set up by Churches Together provides young vulnerable adults aged 16-24 with supported housing and training opportunities

Thank You for Your Continued Interest!

Alive in Faith Campaign Office, The White House, 21 Upgate, Poringland, Norwich, Norfolk NR14 7SH
Telephone: 01508 492202 Email: aliveinfaith@east-angliadiocese.org.uk Website: www.rcdea.org.uk/alive-in-faith

Registered Charity Number: 278742