



ALIVE IN FAITH NEWSLETTER DECEMBER 2018



The *Alive in Faith* Campaign has now been running for nearly four years. We are very conscious of the interest of donors in how their generosity is being applied to practical effect and the aim of this Newsletter is to give you an insight into the income and expenditure which the campaign has provided. There are two over-riding criteria in the management of the funds raised. First is clear and transparent information on the amount of money raised and where it is being spent. The second is the absolute need for prudent and careful consideration of how and where it is directed. In some cases, there has been an instant beneficial effect as the need for financial investment is quite clear. The best example of this is meeting the very high costs of Seminarian Training with 11 Seminarians in various stages of training for the priesthood at a number of Seminaries at home and abroad. In the last year these costs have amounted to £336,000 and this level of expenditure will be required for a number of years in the future. We would hope that as our current Seminarians are ordained, that they will be succeeded by more vocations to sustain the number of priests in the Diocese for the foreseeable future. At the opposite end of the spectrum is how to apply the funds raised for provision for our Priests in retirement. The primary aim for this is the provision of suitable accommodation for those retiring who have no property of their own. As the Diocese has very few properties of a residential nature and even fewer which are suited to retirement, the main thrust is being directed at acquiring properties which meet the special needs of retirement both by location, facilities and accommodation. This is already in hand but such capital projects need to be carefully planned and take time to fruition. We are negotiating the purchase of a retirement flat in Peterborough and we are also preparing to build a retirement bungalow in Newmarket on land already owned by the Diocese. Planning consent has already been granted and it is hoped to start building in the very near future. Other plans are being developed to acquire similar properties but these can be identified as the retirement plans of individuals are developed. This process is being overseen by a recently formed Retired Clergy Support Group. Over the coming years we hope to have a portfolio of retirement properties which will be available to our older priests as they retire. It is important to gauge the number of properties which will be required, however, any such property not actually occupied by a retired priest can be let commercially to generate an income which can be applied to our overall provision for retired priests. It is vitally important that an appropriate balance is maintained which ensures that supply will meet demand. The amount available as at today is £614,355 and we estimate that we shall spend about £350,000 in the next few years.

There have been a number of successful applications for financial support from the funds raised for Social Outreach. This is being overseen by a Social Outreach Committee to whom such applications are made. You may have had the opportunity to read the report in our diocesan newspaper's last edition. The majority of the applications received are the result of information being provided about suitable causes by members of the Laity both as individuals and from parish groups. In addition to our assistance to specific cases we are also establishing a Diocesan Caritas Group to streamline our existing commitment to the vulnerable members of society in the Diocese with the homeless as a significant target. The total amount spent on Social Outreach to date is £26,474

Lastly the programme of Parish Projects is expanding as individual parishes identify suitable areas which will benefit from special expenditure. These range from simple repair and refurbishment to parish buildings both internally and externally, to upgrading of facilities to meet the needs of the disabled or to improve sound systems in churches. Expenditure so far amounts to £506,800 by 27 parishes with the remaining parishes yet to decide the nature of their parish project.

In summary, the *Alive in Faith* Campaign is not just a question of raising money but it also is making a great difference throughout the Diocese in very many different ways where the funds can finance improvements across the whole range of diocesan activities. With so many activities stimulated by *Alive in Faith*, we are conscious that it is very difficult to ensure that donors are aware of the detailed scope and reach of their generosity. Newsletters are expensive to send out but we hope that this update provides you with an overall oversight of *Alive in Faith* and its benefits across the Diocese.