



Newsletter

April 2015

7th Issue

Life as a Student Priest by David Donaghue

I am currently half way through my second year at St Mary's College, Oscott and will have to complete four more years if I am to be ordained a priest. I'm from St Gregory's Parish in Northampton and I previously worked for eight years in mental healthcare. Life as a student priest is busy and we have many things packed into our day. The day begins with meditation in the college chapel at 6.30 and then community morning prayer at 7.45. After breakfast, lectures begin at 8.50. Today I had two periods of fundamental theology; studying Church documents on Revelation and then after coffee, two more periods studying the early Church Fathers. Mass is at 12.20 and then lunch at 1pm. After a college visit to the chapel to pray for vocations and the staff and students; it's study time in the afternoon. During the afternoon we also have meetings with our spiritual director or formation tutor as well as groups and outside activities such as pro life work and evangelisation. I have moved rooms so I am grabbing an hour this afternoon to organise myself and do some reading for my scripture course. Later I have a meeting with the vocations team to discuss a media project to promote vocations to the priesthood. I then have a music practice with the college band as we are preparing for Ash Wednesday mass this week. Supper is 7.15 and tonight we have a college auction to raise money for 'Oscott Action for Justice and Peace'. This is an enjoyable event where we offer different items and creative ideas to bid on and raise funds. I will find time to do evening and night prayer and then will be well ready for bed. We have fantastic men training here, Northampton in particular has outstanding students and I am proud to be from our diocese. We are deeply aware of the privilege we have of being at Oscott and the high level of formation we receive. We are passionate about the Church and serving God's people in today's challenging world. We are close to Our Lady and she is very present in our lives as we look to doing the work of her son as priests. Please pray for us as we really do experience the benefit of your prayers.



Preparing for Ordination to the Diaconate by Brendan Seery

May of this year will be a special month for me as I'm ordained to the Diaconate at Northampton Cathedral. Looking back over the seven years in formation which have led to this point, I would like to take this opportunity to thank all of you who so generously contribute to the Together In Faith project. With your help, I have been able to study the various theological courses expected of a seminarian as well as being able to continue to study Canon Law through Heythrop College. Your continuing support has given me the freedom to discern a vocation to the Priesthood and for that I thank you. Please remember all of us who are studying for the priesthood in your prayers, just as we continue to hold you in ours.



Prayer for Vocations

Lord, Jesus Christ, Good Shepherd of our souls,
You who know Your sheep and
know how to reach the human heart.
Stir the hearts of those people
who would follow You
But who cannot overcome doubts and fears.

You who are the Word of the Father,
the Word which enlightens and sustains hearts,
conquer with Your Spirit the resistance and
delays of indecisive hearts.
Awaken in those whom You call the
courage of love's answer:
'Here I am, send me.'

Sick and Retired Clergy

Together In Faith continues to fund the support of priests who have ceased active ministry. Currently there are 20 priests benefiting from this support. In addition, care in the home is provided to priests for whom assessment by the Diocesan Welfare Office shows that it is needed. Where a priest needs to move into a care home, funding is provided towards this cost.

Parish Project News— St Thomas Aquinas, Bletchley

The urgent need for re-wiring and the installation of a fire safety system gave us the impetus to do a "make over" at St Thomas Aquinas Church in Bletchley. The money accrued for Parish Projects through the Together In Faith Campaign has meant that we have been able to decorate the whole church, replace the 1950s church chairs with new cushioned seating and re-carpet the entire church and parish meeting room. What was a loved but tired looking building is now fresh, bright, comfortable, safe and inviting and still loved.

Father Christopher Perry



Financial Summary

What you have contributed so far:

Gifts	Gift Aid	Total
£6,211,962	£1,283,275	£7,495,237

Facts and Figures

We are delighted that receipts have now passed the £7 million milestone. Please do keep the Campaign in your prayers. The total active **Together In Faith** pledges are currently worth £9.23 million. If these pledges are received we will meet our targets of raising £3.4m for Sick and Retired Clergy, £975k for Priestly Formation, £500k for Lay Formation, £3.9m for parish projects and £451k for order share, which will be a fantastic achievement!

Expenditure to date for the three main causes is as follows:

- Sick and Retired Clergy £ 1,068,069
- Priestly Formation £ 677,632
- Lay Formation £ 18,936

In addition to the above, £412,028 has been transferred to religious orders who run parishes in our Diocese, to help support their sick and retired clergy and seminarians.



Supporting Parishes

Twenty two parishes so far, have benefited from **Together In Faith** parish funds. A total of £1,338,342 has been spent on projects ranging from parish missions and new hymn books to building projects providing additional facilities.

A parish is able to carry out its project once it has exceeded its **TIF** goal, obtained Diocesan approval and accrued sufficient funds to cover the cost of the project. More details about your own parish can be found in the personalised e-mail or letter accompanying this newsletter or through your parish.

A total of £414,198 has been transferred for debt reduction in 16 parishes. These parishes chose to use their **Together In Faith** funds to repay debt, which generally arose from historic essential projects, helping them become more financially stable and saving money on interest.

Campaign Prayer

Blessed are you, Lord God. Through your goodness, the Church in the Diocese of Northampton has flourished for 160 years. We have endeavoured by your grace, to contribute our time, talents and treasure in building a community of believers in our parishes, with the Lord Jesus Christ as our foundation.

As we work **Together In Faith**, we ask for the grace of your Holy Spirit.

So that we might know your will and be strengthened in our work, we ask for your blessings and for the patronage of Blessed Mary Immaculate and of St Thomas of Canterbury.

We ask this through Our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, forever and ever,

Amen

Happy to Help...

We hope this newsletter is useful to you. Should you have any questions or need to speak to somebody about your individual pledge, our **Together In Faith** Administrator is always happy to help and can be reached using the contact details below:

Campaign Administrator: Claire Morton

Together In Faith Office: Diocese of Northampton, Bishop's House, Marriott Street, Northampton, NN2 6AW

Tel: 01604 712065

Email: tifadmin@northamptondiocese.com

Website: www.northamptondiocese.org/togetherinfaithnews

