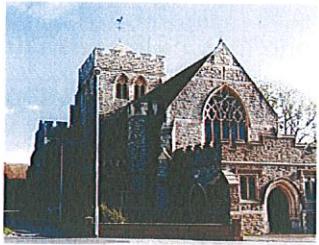


St Mary Magdalene's Parish Financial Statement 2018



Parish Finance

In October 2018 I signed off the parish accounts for the 2017 Parish Financial Year. This was quite an odd thing considering I did not arrive in the Parish until well after the conclusion of this year. Now, again I sign off and present you the accounts for the 2018 Parish Financial Year and again it feels odd as I neither had any input into the setting of this budget or its implementation. Now as we move into 2019, my study of the accounts, listening to the advice of the Parish Finance and Management Committee and taking a general pulse of the parish since my arrival at the end of September, I am now in a position to set out a financial '*state of the union*' that is the Parish of Bexhill, incorporating Little Common and Sidley.

Income

It is quite clear that parish income has dropped sharply (by £100,000) since 2016:

- £290,000 in 2016,
- £210,000 in 2017,
- £190,136 in 2018

Weekly Offertory:

The largest proportion of our income comes from the offertory, the weekly plate and standing orders. We have seen a steady decline in parish offertory:

- £147,374 in 2016
- £139,311 in 2017
- £131,578 in 2018

At the October Mass count we declared to the diocese that 721 people (*including children*) come to Mass across the Parish communities, meaning that the average giving per person was £182.50 a year or £3.51 per week. The diocesan pastoral plan commented that the average weekly income per parishioner across the diocese struggles to buy a pint of beer in Brighton.

How much should we be giving? That is up to you. Often when I speak to parishioners about financial giving, either they ask me about the concept of tithing (*the idea of giving 10% of our disposable income*), which we have not adopted in the Catholic Church or they joke with me about giving the ‘widow’s mite’, until I point out that she gave everything that she had to live on! In last year’s statement, I encouraged you to give (*on average per person*) an extra £1 a week; this is also the message that the Diocese gave during the Pastoral Plan presentations in December. This, I hope, is a realistic target and one that should cause the minimum of hardship. This would raise the parish offertory to £169,000 and help us take a step closer to balancing the budget.

As a minimum, however, we really do need to see a move away from a weekly offering of a few coins each week. Ideally, we would want to see more bank notes in the offertory, or even better a gift-aided offertory and by standing-order, which the parishioner reviews each year. Therefore, if you have not reviewed your standing order since last year (*or ever*), now, please, is the time to do so.

Legacies and Donations:

Legacies and donations have been a significant feature of our parish income over the past years, but for a variety of reasons, these have also declined:

- £81,121 in 2016
- £16,847 in 2017
- £6,185 in 2018

I would ask you to consider when writing or updating your will to consider leaving to your parish family either a small percentage donation of your estate or a fixed amount. Legacies and donations, however, should never form the basis of a financial budget, but are used for special projects and works.

Expenditure:

I would like to commend the work of the Parish Finance and Management Committee for working to reduce our parish expenditure year on year from 2016 to 2018:

- £298,718 in 2016
- £254,917 in 2017
- £251,064 in 2018

These reductions are good, but when laid aside the incomes for those years, the parish has had the following budgetary deficits:

- -£8,718 in 2016
- -£44,126 in 2017
- -£60,928 in 2018

The biggest outlay is on personnel, buildings, administration and diocesan levies (*levies further reduce the value of our Offertory income by 33%*). While some time and motion study might seem prudent it is likely that much of the administrative burden will remain and may even increase if Bexhill becomes a hub for other small centres as the Pastoral Plan: 'the Word who is Life' begins to be implemented across the diocese.

Without a significant increase in income, the on-going deficit cannot be allowed to continue. As of June 2019, the Parish Bank Balance fluctuates at around £100,000, which does not allow much room for manoeuvre and could place us in financial difficulty as early as 2020, so again, I implore you to review your financial giving.

Buildings

We currently have eight buildings in the parish:

- 3 Churches
- 3 Halls
- 1 presbytery / pastoral centre / office
- 1 Nursery

It seems certain that changes to the parish structure are now necessary and, perhaps, even overdue.

The Nursery:

On 3rd March I wrote to you announcing the closure of the Nursery. ***Please see the separate financial statement where I give a more detailed comment.*** When the academic year comes to an end on 19th July, we will have a clearer understanding of the final financial position and what, if any, financial liabilities remain to the parish.

Our Lady of the Rosary:

There has been, over the years, much speculation, discussion and even expectation of 'when', not 'if', we move away from the site in Sidley, and the Bishop has now proposed a final Mass at Our Lady of the Rosary on 6th October. How has this come about? This Church was built in 1954, but the design and construction used at the time gave it a lifespan of about 50 years. When the Church was built, there was much rejoicing and the community are to be congratulated on reaching their 65th anniversary this year, and when Bishop Richard comes for the final Mass, I hope that this will also be a celebration of all that has been achieved. The fabric of the site at Our Lady of the Rosary is in some parts, worn, and in other parts condemned. The first decision I made on arriving was to close the parish hall at Our Lady of the Rosary. To a new eye, it was clearly dangerous, and this has been confirmed by the survey report. It will not re-open, and eventually must be cleared. The cost of building a new hall may well prove to be prohibitive.

The Church is worn and not necessarily dangerous at this time, but the state of the fabric will not improve, and much work is needed to bring it up to modern day requirements. The recent survey report showed that the whole site needs £160,000 spent on it, but as we have seen, with a loss of income of £100,000 we are really talking about the need to have £250,000 available before we could even consider embarking on any repair projects. It would not seem a satisfactory project to repair a site which is already 15 years beyond its original life-expectancy; from the moment of any repair the clock would again start ticking and the on-going maintenance costs would be high.

The cost of building a new Church would be high, and even if we had the money to build a new Church, we would need to ask whether it is necessary when we have two other Churches in the parish, which are no more than 2 miles away. Bishop Richard has appointed Caroline Walsh, the Chair of the Parish Finance Committee in Lewes to facilitate discussions on how the many sacred items in the Church can be re-appointed to St Mary Magdalene and St Martha's and how the sale of the site, in part or in whole, may be realised for the benefit of the whole parish, which might well include enhancements to existing facilities, including the Presbytery / Parish Centre at St Mary Magdalene which is already well used.

Other sites: We still have two other halls in the parish. The Parish Hall based at St Martha's in Little Common remains a good source of income to the Parish. It is the view of the Parish Finance and Management Committee that the primary focus of this hall is to raise money for the parish, while still being available at certain times for parish use. Therefore, the parish hall at St Mary Magdalene is the primary hall for parish activities, while still being available for hire from time to time for commercial activity. The old monastic building behind St Mary Magdalene serves a three-fold purpose. It is sometimes joked that we priests live in huge houses, when the reality is that the two substantives priests each live in one-bedroom apartments. The rest of the building is given over to the Parish Office, Catechetical and meeting space. Much work has been done over the years to make it a useful resource, but I would question whether it is really fit for purpose and available to the parish as much as it could be, while still affording the priests the rightful expectation of peace and privacy. The new Diocesan Welfare Officer has also raised the question more widely as to whether parish offices should be inside priests' houses. As you know I had some ill-health at Easter and both the doctor, and the diocesan welfare officer commented on the lack of demarcation between work and home.

Other

Fundraising: Between 2016 and 2018, the yearly fundraising income has been between £5,000 and £6,000. In this time of need to renew our financial giving I look forward to hearing from individuals and groups of parishioners about new and interesting / innovative fundraising activities, including those that enhance the social life of the parish. If you feel part of the community, perhaps, you feel more inclined to give!?

Charitable Donations:

The financial statement gives a breakdown of the second collections for 2018, and on behalf of those good causes I thank you for your generosity. I am conscious that there is a second collection every week, as there are so many good causes needing our support. I would like to draw two funds to your attention: the **parish poor fund** and the **parish charity fund**. The money you give to these funds is restricted, meaning that it therefore cannot be used for general parish maintenance. You have consistently responded well to these funds and I, with the approval of both the Parish Finance Committee and the Pastoral Care Group, have used some of this money to make Christmas and Easter gifts to local charities that work with the poor and homeless of our areas, including the HUG at St Barnabas, the Pelham in Sidley, the Bexhill Foodbank and the Snowflake Shelter. While these funds may, on receipt of a proper application, be used to help other parishioners in hardship, I have been strongly advised by all who work with the needy and homeless in our town not to give money out at the door, and as such we rarely keep any money on the premises.

More Information Required?

We are not, currently, in the custom of having annual finance meetings, not wishing to over-burden people with additional meetings. Conscious that some people have asked for more information I have tried to give a much fuller explanation of the Parish Finances. However, if you have any further questions, the Parish Finance and Management Committee are happy to answer them. You can write or email them via the Parish Office.

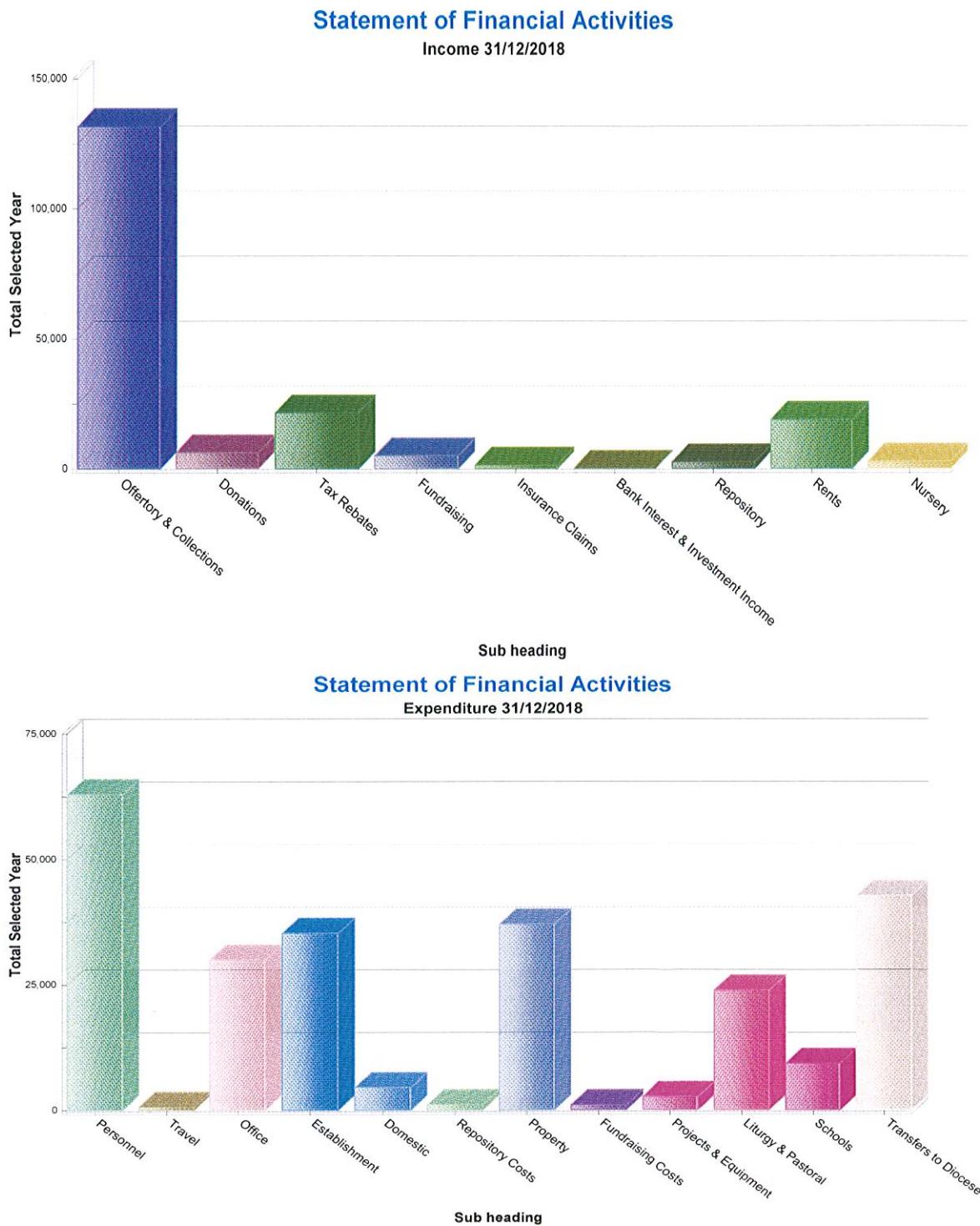
With my prayers and best wishes and remember:

"each of you must give as you have made up your mind, not reluctantly or under compulsion,
for God loves a cheerful giver".

(2 Corinthians 9:7)

Fr Simon Dray

St Mary Magdalene's Parish
Statement of Financial Activities
For the period from 01 January 2018 to 31 December 2018



	<u>2017</u>	<u>2018</u>
<u>Income</u>		
Offertory & Collections	£139,311	£131,708
Donations	£9,347	£6,185
Legacies	£7,500	----
Tax Rebates	£22,008	£21,530
Fundraising	£6,580	£5,041
Bank Interest & Investment Income	£823	£46
Repository	£2,202	£2,588
Rents	£23,016	£18,892
Insurance	----	£1,410
Nursery	----	£2,733
Sundry	£3	£3
<u>Total Income</u>	£210,790	£190,136
<u>Expenditure</u>		
Personnel	£74,499	£62,997
Travel	£1,449	£664
Office	£30,232	£29,942
Establishment	£37,291	£35,296
Domestic	£3,881	£4,531
Bank Interest Paid & Charges	£4	----
Repository Costs	£1,166	£1,163
Property	£30,810	£37,096
Fundraising Costs	£64	£976
Projects & Equipment	£5,596	£2,607
Liturgy & Pastoral	£38,290	£23,792
Nursery	£6,505	£9,245
Transfers to Diocese	£25,126	42,751
Sundry	£4	£4
<u>Total Expenditure</u>	£254,917	£251,064
<u>Net Deficit/Surplus</u>	(£44,126)	(£60,928)

	<u>2018</u>
Parish Charity Fund	£5,208
Parish Clergy Fund	£13,506
Parish Flower Fund	(£330)
Parish Lourdes Fund	£11,101
Parish Pastoral Fund	£3983
Parish Poor Fund	£5,783
Parish Properties	£4,906
Parish School Fund	£3,322

<u>Collections</u>	<u>2018</u>
The Spiritans	£605
Diocesan Missionary Endeavour Diocesan Collection	£197
Education Future Priests Diocesan Collection	£256
Retired Priests Diocesan Collection	£364
Racial Justice	£106
Christians Against Poverty	£177
Lenten Alms	£249
Holy Places	£573
Catholic Communications Network	£200
Catholic Education Service	£151
Day for Life	£195
Peters Pence	£238
Apostleship of Sea	£231
Arundel Cathedral Maintenance Diocesan Collection	£248
Cafod Fast Day Lent	£1,407
Cafod Fast Day Harvest	£1,124
Case	£214
Survive Miva	£136
The Little Way Association	£168
Cafod	£2,124
Missio	£245
Lourdes Pilgrimage Trust	£341
Pax Christi	£277
SVP	£1,087
PACT	£332
SPUC	£215
Total Payout	£11,460

A brief explanation of some items included in Expenditure are given below:

Personnel-Tax and National Insurance, Salaries, Payments to Clergy, Supply Priests etc

Office-Administration Fees, Printing Costs, Telephone, Stationary etc.

Establishment-Gas, Water Electricity, Council Tax etc

Domestic-Food, Housekeeping, etc.

Property-Maintenance, Repairs, etc

Projects/Equipment-Approved Projects, Health & Safety Equipment, Purchases of Household Items etc

PARISH PRIEST

DATE

S. J. B. Fr. John Dray

17.06.2019

There may be minor discrepancies in the totals if the pence are not being shown
E&OE