

St Margaret's, Dunfermline & The Holy Name, Oakley



Working together to secure the financial future of our communities

April 2022

Dear parishioners,

For most of our lives Church finances has been one the “mysteries of the faith”, with little or no explanation or accountability given to parishioners. Thankfully, this attitude is changing. Transparency is crucial; not only because we are bound to meet certain legal standards, but because it highlights that we are all vital members of the Church and we all have a stake in the wellbeing of our parish. In early 2020, Fr Chris Heenan formed a Finance Committee to ensure that our financial resources are utilised as prudently as they can be. Members of the group are: Stephen Wilson, Annette McEnaney, John McIlduff and Paddy Mallan.

Holy Name and St Margaret's have long histories and we are grateful for the generosity and sacrifices made by our forebears in the faith. They have left a proud legacy. The maintenance and upkeep of our buildings is costly. Over £750,000 has been expended on the St Margaret's legacy project, with the completion date set for 15th July this year. At Holy Name; the gantry system in the loft space used to lower the lights for cleaning and replacement does not meet safety standards and needs replaced. An accessible toilet is also on the wish list and we will possibly replace the Church entrance steps. There are financial demands made by the Archdiocese: 18.5% of offertory income is levied as a tax by the Diocese; due to the shortfall in monies for the Aged and Infirm Clergy Fund (AICF) the diocese is considering increasing this levy to 32%. Last year we made a one-off contribution of £20,000 to the AICF to alleviate some of the financial pressure on the fund in the short-term.

The impact of the Covid 19 pandemic on the financial wellbeing of our Parish is significant. Our income in 2020 and 2021 was down by some £68,000 in each year compared to pre-covid 2019 contribution levels. Due to our Churches being closed for the most of 2020/21 we have experienced the inevitable drop in income from offertory collections and Gift Aid envelopes. Some parishioners have taken the welcome step of converting from Gift Aid envelopes to Direct Debit payments.

The Parish Finance Group has been looking at how we can meet the challenges of the Covid 19 impact, maintaining a balance between income and expenditure and building funding for future major projects. The Finance Committee encourage sustained and realistic giving so that we too will leave a legacy of faith for the next generation to build upon. Suggested options are contained in this leaflet. They are simple, realistic and achievable.

I cannot stress enough that I do not want to put anyone under undue pressure. We are all in different financial situations. Parishioners are facing increasing prices for energy, car fuel and basic food items. If you cannot afford to give any more, that is fine. All I ask is that you seriously consider if you can take up any of the suggestions outlined in the pages ahead. The parish is not in any kind of financial difficulty: this is about thinking for the future and having faith in that future.

Jesus founded the Church to continue His saving Mission to the world. We experience that in our local church community. It is here that we listen to God's word of challenge, inspiration and comfort. It is here that people become members of Christ's body through baptism and are sealed with the gifts of the Holy Spirit. It is here that we are nourished by Christ's Body and Blood to be His living presence in the world. It is here that sins are forgiven and hope restored. It is here that men and women become one in Christ. It is here that we thank God for the life of our loved ones and commend them to God's love. It is here that those in need, at home and abroad, are supported with the hand of solidarity and prayer: think of the wonderful work of our Saint Vincent de Paul Society and One World Group.

What a wonderful legacy to leave!

Yours Sincerely,

Fr Syriac Palakudiyil

EXPLANATION OF OUR FINANCIAL SITUATION FROM OUR FINANCE COMMITTEE

As promised in the last newsletter (March 2021) here is the update on our financial position.

- A) Our financial accounts for 2021, 2020 and 2019 are shown below.
- B) Our parish income broken down by category.

A) FINANCIAL STATEMENT (INCOME v EXPENDITURE)

In terms of Income and expenditure 2021 was an exceptional year in comparison to previous years, for 2 main reasons;

- 1) Impact of the ongoing Covid pandemic on our Income due to our restricted attendances at church
- 2) The ongoing costs associated with the Legacy Project at St Margaret's

St Margaret's and Holy Name	Actual	Actual	Actual
Actuals	2021	2020	2019
	£000's	£000's	£000's
Income from the Parish	142	142	210
Target Increase	0	0	0
Interest from Archdiocese	2	10	12
VAT /Cost Refund	58	45	136
Legacies	0	0	0
Total Income	202	197	358
Expenses			
St Margaret's Legacy Project	97	469	163
Holy Name Legacy	0	0	0
Repairs and Maintenance	17	33	44
Loans to Archdiocese	0	0	39
Total Repairs and Refurbishment	114	502	246
Archdiocesan Assessment	16	21	21
Parish Overheads - St Margaret's	67	70	94
Parish Overheads Holy Name	18	13	30
Retired Priests Fund	20	0	0
Total Expenses	235	606	391
(Deficit)/Surplus	-33	-409	-33

B) INCOME STATEMENT

These figures show we are down on parish income in 2021 by £68,000 compared to 2019, which is coincidentally the same shortfall between 2020 and 2019 due to the coronavirus pandemic closing our churches.

St Margaret's and Holy Name	2021 £000's Actual	2020 £000's Actual	2019 £000's Actual
Offertory Collections. Non-Gift Aid	38	26	53
Offertory Collections. Gift Aid	73	83	94
Gift Aid Tax Repayment	18	26	26
Stall	0	2	12
Special Collections	3	1	13
Fundraising	3	3	3
Refunds Rec'd	58	0	6
Hall	0	1	3
Other	9	0	0
Total	202	142	210

We need to recover from this position. To achieve this, we need your help. Things you can consider doing are;

- Sign up for Standing Order payments for your monthly or weekly collection.
- Join the Gift Aid Scheme. By completing a Gift Aid form and declaration form
- Add an extra £1 to your weekly collection.

Fill in a standing order and give it to your bank. You do not have to give weekly or monthly envelope donations. The bank will do it for you at no cost to you. It also guarantees your donation when you are away. A standing order form is attached. Please renew expired standing orders.

If you are a taxpayer then, through the Gift Aid scheme, your parish can receive a further 25% of your offertory donation – at no extra cost to yourself. Gift Aid can be donated up to the amount of Income tax and/or Capitals Gains Tax you pay in each tax year. So, if you pay £1,000 tax in the year you can donate up to £1,000 to as many different gift aid schemes as you wish. A gift aid form is attached and can be returned to Father Syriac at your convenience.

At St Margaret's, we will no longer be printing dated and individually numbered envelopes. Instead, we ask you to use your old supply of envelopes until they are complete. We have a large supply of envelopes and all we ask you to do is to ensure your own unique number is written on the envelopes when you make your donation. Unnumbered envelopes are available for pick up from the church porch. At Holy Name, we still have pre-printed numbered envelopes that we ask you to continue using.

Now that we have recommenced offertory collections at weekend masses, we will also restart our Building Fund collections on the last weekend of each month.

The finance committee will continue to update you on the actual financial position yearly.

I am confident that, as a parish, we can work together to resolve our future funding needs. **Only give if you can afford it.**