

### An introduction to Parish Share

I thought it would be worth covering Parish Share as a separate topic as I suspect that few people have had the opportunity to investigate and understand its purpose. I will endeavour to explain how the Parish Share is calculated generically and then specifically how this translates to St Mary's.

The Parish Share is one of the mainstays of funding for the Church of England and the money comes from parishes like ours all over the country, money that we either give personally or raise through our regular church activities. The vast majority of the fund collected is used by the dioceses to cover the cost of parochial ministry and any surplus used for mission purposes.

What does that mean in practical terms? It means that parishes pay money to their own Diocese that the Diocese then uses to cover the costs of clergy stipends, pensions, National Insurance, housing and Council Tax. In addition the Diocese has to cover the cost of training both for ordinands and existing clergy. For 2016, all of these items taken together give an average cost per clergy post of approximately £56,000. In an ideal world, every Parish would be able to cover at least its own cost of ministry, but this is not an ideal world.

The Warwick Parishes who receive support from the King Henry VIII Endowed Trust operate a little differently. As I covered in last week's letter, the Trust pays money directly to the Diocese to cover the cost of our Clergy stipends, leaving us to cover the cost of training and a small element of housing from our day to day income.

A Diocese prepares its overall budget by calculating the cost of parochial ministry for each Deanery and the Deanery then divides that out between individual Parishes. The Diocese of Coventry has 11 Deaneries but as you might expect, not all Deaneries are equal. The Deaneries of Coventry North, Coventry East and Nuneaton contain parishes where the cost of parochial ministry far exceeds the income derived from the parishioners.

This means that when the Diocesan budget is divided back up between the Deaneries and then between the Parishes, the more affluent Parishes and Deaneries pay contributions into a central Support Fund to enable those in need to draw funds from it. This is part of the mission of the Church of England to take the Christian message to less affluent areas of our towns and cities and is no less important than any overseas mission.

Every year, the Deaneries meet to discuss their level of need or contribution. For 2016, the Deaneries in need requested financial support to the tune of 11.4 clergy posts, a monetary value of approximately £640,000. This is effectively a request to the other Deaneries to cover the costs firstly of their own clergy posts and then a further 11.4 clergy posts on top. This financial support is called the Support Fund element of the Parish Share.

Agreement was reached and the target met and the resulting request of the combined Warwick Parishes was to contribute the value of 1.58 clergy posts. The Warwick Parishes have subsequently agreed how this request should be split and St Mary's PCC has agreed to pay a Support Fund contribution of approximately £23,500.

# Stewardship Campaign 2016

## Letters from the Treasurer



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When we add in training and housing costs, the total St Mary's Parish Share payment for 2016 will be around £40,000. This compares to a payment of £85,000 in 2011 and hence a drop of more than 50% in 5 years. It is also set to drop a little further in 2017.

While this is fantastic news for our finances at St Mary's, it inevitably means that the assistance we are offering to poorer areas of our Diocese has dropped considerably in the last 5 years and it has left other parishes in our Diocese to fill the gap in funding that we have left. Is this inevitable and are we comfortable with it?

This and other similar questions I will pose in my final letter.

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