

Dear Friends,

The more I understand about the personality of Jesus, the more I appreciate that He was a man who was constantly giving: giving thanks, giving love, giving guidance, giving hope, giving encouragement, giving reassurance, giving an example, giving Himself. Perhaps our lives too can be gauged and judged by how much we give of ourselves to enhance the lives of others.

You may remember my saying - prompted by the story of the visit of the Magi to the infant Christ, which is the only example I can think of when Jesus the giver, was Himself given gifts, gold, incense and myrrh - that the story shows us the threefold way in which we need to give: by investing our resources, involving ourselves and compassionately intervening in the lives of others. I invited you then to become more involved in the activities of the church and encouraged you to intervene in the lives of those who need your support. What then of our responsibility to invest in the life of Christ's Church, to secure its presence in every community in our city and make a creative difference to people's lives?

Currently it costs £225,000 per year to maintain the ministry and mission of St. Mary's.

£92,000 will be going to the Diocese in 2018.

Of this £26,148 is paid to me, gross, as stipend (annual wage).

The rest is used:

- * To provide other parishes in less affluent areas of the Diocese with a church and priest, who would not otherwise have one.
- * To pay the cost of the renovation and external decoration of the properties which the Diocese owns.
- * To pay the costs of Diocesan Church House, which supports the chaplaincies and parishes.
- * To pay the 5 Archdeacons and 7 Bishops of the Diocese.
- * To pay for those in training for the Ministry.
- * To pay the pensions to Clergy who have retired.
- * To support General Synod and the costs of running the national Church.

In addition to this St. Mary's pays the costs of:

- * The Assistant Priest, the Office Staff, Organist and Organ Scholar.
- * The maintenance of our church building, including repairs, heating, lighting, insurance etc.
- * A portion of the cost of upkeep for the church grounds.
- * The parish also makes various donations to charities, from extra collections at certain services and events.

Over recent years, under the effective management of the Finance and Stewardship Group and our Parish Treasurer, we have cut costs as much as we can without negatively affecting the church we love and appreciate so much. The position we are currently in is that, given on average we have an attendance at St. Mary's of 230, we need in the region of £55 per person per month ((£12.50 per week) to maintain the ministry and mission we offer. I know that some of you will not be able to give so much, whilst others may wish to give more. Whatever you give, thank you for investing in the life of St. Mary's.

As all of us consider how blessed we are in our lives, as a gesture of thanks toward the God who blesses us, please may I encourage you to give as generously and as regularly as you can toward the ministry and mission of your parish church. The preferred way of contributing nowadays is by Standing Order (details of which are included in this mailing), indicating whether the church can receive an extra 25% through Gift Aid, through no cost to yourself.

St. Mary`s is a church and a community which, following the example of Christ, seeks to constantly give too. Please invest in its vision and its commitment to the people of this area as richly as you possibly can through your financial giving and also through your fuller involvement in its life.

With thanks and best wishes

Jeff Hopkin Williams,

Vicar of St. Mary`s Twickenham.

November 2017.