



Sir Peter Fahy -The Role of Stewardship

Stewardship is key. It ensures that the money so generously pledged by so many people in faith and love for the Church is well used and properly accounted for. Much of this is covered by existing accounting and oversight practises in the Diocese and the policies agreed upon as part of **Our Mission Together**. Ensuring the accountability and impact of your gift is of paramount importance. The Campaign Advisory Committee (CAC) has already approved funding for the retired priest welfare officer, additional support to seminarians, youth mission and the grants for the work of CARITAS. I will be monitoring that this is well used. This campaign is about mission and providing the means for our faith to be put into action. While money is helpful, clearly the Gospel only really comes alive through the prayers and actions of the faithful and more people feeling the power of Our Lord's mercy and love. This can never be captured in an accountancy balance sheet and the financial success of the campaign is clearly only a part of our overall goal, please see inside for our impact so far.



Pictured above: *Sir Peter Fahy, Stewardship Coordinator for Our Mission Together*

“This campaign is about mission and providing the means for our faith to be put into action.”

Our Mission Together By Numbers



Our Mission Together (OMT) has now been running for 15 months. Over this period, the initiative has grown in support, momentum, and most importantly in the difference it is helping to make.

Before embarking on the campaign, a lot of thought and prayer went into the development of the three key pillars. So much has been achieved in these areas with a variety of parish projects identified, the expanding depth of CARITAS outreach, youth mission beginning in September, ongoing support for seminarians and our retired clergy.



8,320

households have learnt about the vision for their parish and the Diocese



131

number of volunteers



2,525

pledges received



51

parish projects identified



3

new Caritas employees appointed



5,001,397

amount of pledges to date



2

youth worker posts advertised



119%

average percentage of goal raised by completed parishes

Strengthening Our Parishes

Already over £1.5 million has been raised for parish projects. Thanks to the generosity of parishioners who have gone above and beyond regular offertory giving, over 51 local cases have been identified. In the last four weeks, three parishes have actively started work on their local initiatives, an example of the impact **OMT** is making across the Diocese.

As more parishes are engaged, the variety of parish needs, practical as well as pastoral, has been a point of great interest. These projects have already helped to enhance the sense of community spirit within parishes and they have really brought parishioners together with a common goal in mind.

The following two are just a glimpse of the exciting local cases that are underway or have been identified. They are an example of some of the much needed work being undertaken thanks to the success of the **OMT** initiative. We look forward to having plenty more news for you in the coming year.

Our Lady and St John, Heswall

Canon Stephen Coonan is Parish Priest in Our Lady and St John, Heswall. Thanks to the support of his parishioners, the parish well surpassed its goal, raising over £178,000. They recently made their first funding application for their local project. The work in Our Lady and St John's parish is centred around refurbishing the interior of the church in the next two months:

- The church's interior will be painted for the first time in 13 years
- The sanctuary rear wall will be smoothed down and re-painted after some significant structural work was carried out last year
- Spot lights will be fitted above the sanctuary
- Essential maintenance to the church organ will also be carried out

This much needed work will ensure the parish remains a comfortable place of welcome and worship for all parishioners as it is thanks to their generosity that this is possible.



Canon Gannon (below) and above shows some activities to raise awareness of refugees



Parish of Our Lady and St Christopher, Romiley

Canon Michael Gannon (Vicar General) and the parish of Our Lady and St Christopher, Romiley have recently embarked on **OMT**. They are the first parish in the Diocese to become involved with the Home Office and the **Syrian Vulnerable Person Resettlement scheme**. The parish sees it as its Christian duty to support and reach out to those, who through no fault of their own, find themselves in this situation. Through the **OMT** initiative the parish of Our Lady and St Christopher will be able to live out the gospel in practical ways **"I was a stranger and you made me welcome"** (Matthew 25:35).

This unique parish project has been made possible thanks to the support of CARITAS who will be working closely with Canon Gannon and volunteers, offering professional insight and expertise. It's wonderful to see the **OMT** initiative and money raised through the generosity of parishioners from all around the Diocese being responsible for such an empowering local case.

Our Social Impact



“Things don’t happen by accident.....But sometimes elements unite and change happens and a NEW LIFE begins!” (M.Kilcoyne)



Pictured above: MP Mike Kane, CEO Mary Kilcoyne, Bishop Mark Davies, Dr Philip McCarthy CSAN Chief Executive

Developing the CARITAS Vision and Mission

CARITAS Shrewsbury was officially launched in February 2017 and under the excellent leadership of CEO Mary Kilcoyne, has gone from strength to strength in the impact it is making in communities throughout the Diocese.

CARITAS is already offering a range of services and in 2017-2018 hopes to expand. CARITAS is working in a variety of areas at the moment as their remit continues to broaden.

School Family Support Service

Thanks to funds provided by **OMT**, CARITAS is providing a unique and tailored service to schools, children, and families in the Diocese. It is currently operating in 16 schools in the Wirral and Runcorn area, addressing breakdown in families, mental health, addiction and bereavement.

In addition, a new social worker was appointed in Greater Manchester in January 2017 working in Hattersey, Hyde, Dukinfield, and Wythenshawe. Such is the demand for support, an extra social worker will be needed in the coming months. The scale of the engagement so far is a testament to the necessity of the support CARITAS is providing and the positive effect it is having in the key area of family support service.

In the Spirit of the Gospel, we work with children and families to build stronger, supportive communities wherever there is current disadvantage

Refugee Response: The Well Project

The Well Project is currently in operation in Wythenshawe where a refugee drop in centre is open. It has been operational since January 2017 and some of the services offered include:

- English Language Lessons
- Mother and Toddler groups
- Assistance with Local Authority Matters

The recent hiring of a CARITAS Refugee Project Development Worker (Rasha Youssef) has already made a tremendous difference. The need to have a dedicated frontline person, giving active witness to the commitment of the Diocese to respond to the needs of those seeking refuge and asylum has long been recognised.



Pictured above: Mary Kilcoyne and Rasha Youssef. Rasha’s role includes:

- Raising awareness about the situation of refugees here in the UK, their needs and their everyday experiences
- Outreach to families living in the Wythenshawe area by working with the Well Project

Supporting Our Clergy in Retirement

One aspect in this third pillar is ***priests in retirement***. Currently there are 27 retired priests in the Diocese with a further 20 due to retire in the next five years. These priests have given the Diocese of Shrewsbury a lifetime of service and are still very active. Many of them lend their services on most weekends to parishes that may be in need of a priest or they visit the sick in hospital. Their help and support remains an invaluable asset to the Diocese and they deserve a dignified retirement.

Thanks to the generosity and support shown to **OMT**, the Diocese was able to hire a clergy welfare officer earlier this year. Margaret Evans (pictured right) has been an incredible asset to the Diocese and retired clergy. She visits all our retired clergy regularly. Her important role includes ensuring the holistic, physical and mental well-being of our clergy. It is wonderful to see **OMT** funds having such a tangible impact on the lives of our retired clergy.



Continuing Our Service Past Active Ministry by Canon Brendan Hoban



“Catholic priests retire at 75. In our Diocese there is a strong sense that they should be well cared for in their later years. The Diocese provides each priest with a home and a pension. Twice a year they meet to discuss matters of mutual interest.

The Bishop has now appointed a Retired Priests’ Welfare Officer in the person of Mrs. Margaret Evans. She has particular expertise in the care of the elderly. Her prime concerns are in the areas of health, of welfare, and of the financial benefits to which the elderly may be entitled.

Our retired priests are a group of contented men who appreciate the care the Diocese gives them, and this has now been reinforced by the expertise and good humour with which Mrs Evans enriches their lives.”

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