



Building our Community and Shaping our Future

Dear brothers and sisters in Christ,

As the people of God, our faith is central to who we are. Our faith is nurtured by the people around us: our priests, our families, our communities and those we reach out to who are in need.

Investing in our people is an essential part of our future. We need to: train the men who are preparing for the priesthood; assure those who have dedicated their lives to serve our parishes that they will be supported when they retire; assist Catholic individuals and families on their faith journey so that they can continue Christ's mission; and reach out to the vulnerable and marginalised around us.

Your generosity is beginning to help us to achieve all of these things. As you will see from our latest newsletter, there are many examples of this great work that is already underway. With six months remaining until all parishioners across the Diocese will have had the opportunity to learn about **Growing in Faith**, I seek your on-going prayers and support. It is our love for Christ that constantly inspires us in this work. It is our mission as Disciples to pass on what we have learnt and continue to build His Kingdom.

With my thanks and good wishes to you all,

✠ Cardinal Vincent Nichols



Serving our Communities for Over 50 Years Now it's Our Turn to Say Thank You

Over 50 priests are due to step down from their duties of running a parish in the next five years. They will join more than 80 clergy currently living in retirement. Fr Austin Garvey, who is receiving support from the Sick and Retired Priest Fund told us about his life as a priest and explained how much it means to know the Diocese is caring for him in his retirement.

Where did you train and when?

I joined Allen Hall, the seminary at St Edmund's College, near Ware in 1945 and I was ordained in 1951.

Tell us a little bit about your life as a priest:

I spent my first three years at Cambridge reading Classics with a view to teaching at one of the Diocesan schools. I was appointed at St Edmund's College and worked there from 1954 to 1966. I then offered myself to Cardinal Heenan as a Fidei Donum priest for work in South America. He in turn presented me to the Columbian Missionary Society and they invited me to Peru. I stayed there for 12 years. My efforts focused on creating and promoting opportunities for disabled children in poor areas to receive a Catholic education. On my return, in 1978, I was appointed parish priest of St Patrick's, Soho Square where I remained until reaching retirement age in 2001.

Whilst I was at Soho Square, I was asked by Cardinal Hume to act as co-ordinator of the Ethnic Chaplains in the Diocese. On retirement, Cardinal Murphy O'Connor allowed me to continue this work. It involved regularly visiting and keeping in touch with the chaplaincies and organising a variety of meetings.

Since I retired I have been living on the top floor of the presbytery in Marylebone. I really enjoy it here. It's good to be living amongst other priests and be of service to the parish. I say Mass and preach everyday. Our Lady of the Rosary parish is well positioned for public transport so I can get to most places easily. There is also a lift in the presbytery, which is especially helpful!

A final comment...

It is a great blessing to have somewhere comfortable to live. The cost of my training for the priesthood was met by the Priests' Training Fund. Now, in my retirement I receive a small stipend from the Sick and Retired Priest Fund. The Fund also paid for my three-week convalescence at St. Anne's after an NHS heart by-pass operation in 2008. For all of these benefits, I am truly grateful.

Your support is ensuring priests like Fr Garvey can continue to serve the People of God in our communities, whilst knowing we are caring for them. Thank you!



Vocations are Increasing

Supporting vocations is a responsibility we all share. In recent years more men have answered God's call in response to our prayers. The visit of Pope Benedict and the renewed inspiration that Pope Francis brings, gives us the confidence that there will be many more vocations in the years ahead.

Our Vocations Director provides support during the early stages of discernment, guiding the men who come forward as they deepen their relationship with Christ and place their trust in the Church to help them recognise Christ's particular calling for their life. After this initial period, which can sometimes take more than a year, a candidate may be asked to apply formally to the Diocese to begin formation for the priesthood in the seminary.

Your generosity will ensure we can develop new programmes in schools and parishes, provide guidance to the men who believe they are hearing God's call and ensure they are well formed during their time in the seminary.

This summer four men will be Ordained to the Priesthood. Please keep them and all those who are in formation in your prayers.

Food with Friendship

'For I was hungry and you gave me food'

As Christians we are reminded by Matthew (25:35) that our duty to feed the hungry is an essential part of the gift of our salvation. On 2nd May 2014, Cardinal Nichols hosted a Caritas Westminster 'roundtable' discussion on food poverty. The meeting brought together parishes and schools involved in food aid initiatives across our Diocese. Representatives highlighted that most people accessing the projects are caught up in the cycle of unemployment, debt, low pay and benefit delays. Our food aid projects offer food with friendship and provide advice about other organisations that can help.

"An individual accessed one of our food banks for three weeks. As soon as he got a job he returned with bags full of food to help others who were in the same position as he had unexpectedly found himself in."

Caritas Westminster will continue to: co-ordinate efforts that address issues of poverty and social exclusion, create links with parishes, schools, charities and individuals, and build on all the good work that is already happening.

Thank You for Your Continued Support!

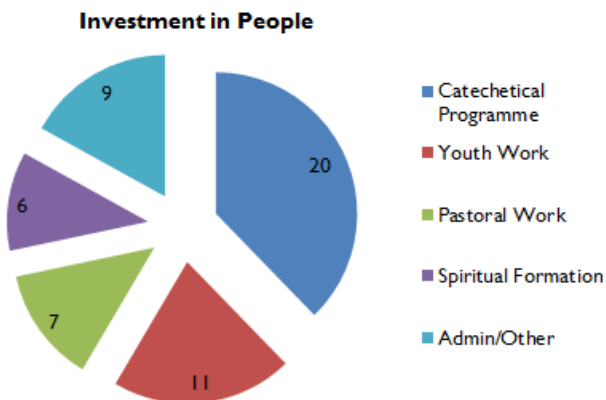
If you are paying by cheque or cash, the **Growing in Faith** office will send you email reminders. Please let us know your email address if you are not already receiving these and would like to. If you require more envelopes to make your donations, please contact the **Growing in Faith** office via email growinginfaith@rcdow.org.uk or call (020) 7798 9099 from 9am to 5pm, Monday to Friday.

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Developing Vibrant Communities

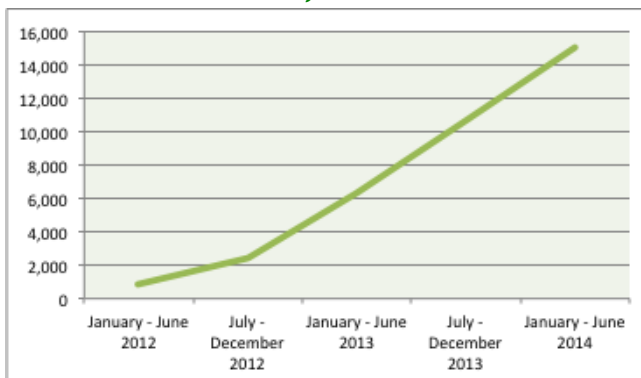
The spirit of our Catholic community lies in the strength of our parishes, where everyday, faithful people celebrate, learn, serve and find support. There are currently 53 **Growing in Faith** parish projects focused on engaging our people and supporting the growth of our faith in Westminster.



Hayes, Kensal Rise and Ware are just three of 20 parishes who are investing in their catechetical programmes, while Shepherd's Bush and Sudbury will fund youth workers to support the young people in their parishes. Developing adult faith formation is a priority in Cricklewood and investing in pastoral and administrative support is key in Tottenham.

Strong parishes becoming vibrant communities of faith is central to the mission of Jesus and to our lives of discipleship. Thanks to your support, **Growing in Faith** is enhancing the vibrancy of our parishes now and for future generations.

More Than 15,000 Gifts and Pledges Received!



Since the pilot parishes began more than 15,000 people have made a financial contribution to help our Church realise the vision we have for our future.

We hope many more individuals and families will support **Growing in Faith** in the months ahead.

