

A review of 2021's accounts

THE CATHOLIC PARISH OF
BOGNOR REGIS AND SLINDON

We are followers of Jesus, on fire with his love,
sharing that love with each other and with the world.

INTRODUCTION

FR CHRIS BERGIN

Dear Parishioners

It is my pleasure to introduce 2021's parish accounts and in the pages that follow you will find concrete descriptions of what your gifts mean to our parish and exactly how your offering is put to use. As always, I am extremely grateful to each and every parishioner for the contributions you make to our parish life, both financially and in the volunteering of your time and talents. I'd also like to take this opportunity to thank the Parish Finance Committee for their hard work in helping to look after our finances in a spirit of gratitude and mission.

As someone who often struggles to read financial charts, I hope that you, like me, will find the information in this booklet easy to understand, enlightening, inspiring and meaningful. We have sought to respond to the kind of questions that many in the parish have about parish finances. We want you to know exactly how your contributions are used and to equip every parishioner with updated and relevant information about every aspect of parish finances.

Financial transparency is crucial if every member of the parish is to take personal responsibility for the financial requirements of being a Church that has moved beyond simply maintaining itself to being a Church concerned with the mission that has been entrusted to us.

It is my hope that you will not only see your financial gift going towards paying for our many buildings, utilities, administration and parish staff, but see your contributions as directly connected to the changed lives you will read about. Finally, as we move forward into another year of uncertainty, I invite all parishioners to be intentional about your financial gift to the mission of our parish so that we can face the future with confidence.

With my prayers for you and for your families,

Fr Chris

THE FRUIT OF OUR GIVING:

Taking the next step in following Jesus

"I have been a Catholic since birth, educated by church schools, and to be honest, I thought I knew the general arguments around the Christian faith. Mum has always been frank about how Jesus sustains all that she does, and going on an Alpha course was a big part of that. The ongoing pandemic led me to be living at Mum and Dad's place here in sunny Middleton-on-Sea; I saw the advert for Alpha online here in the parish (strategically placed on the kitchen worktop). There's contention between Mum and me on who invited who, but either way, I unenthusiastically agreed to join the first Alpha session with my Mum. The people were lovely and the conversation interesting, so I joined the following week, and the week after, and the week after that. What started as a begrudging favour to my Mum, bloomed into a unique opportunity to open my heart.

A place to share my views and experiences and listen to and learn from others doing the very same. The questions led to conversations about love, death, forgiveness and joy (all with a sprinkling of laughter and zero judgement). These were questions I had many times asked myself but rarely asked my friends. I was prayed for, an experience I found profoundly moving in a quietly powerful way. And as we shared and laughed and watched the movies (albeit sometimes jealous of the presenters' jet setting lifestyle), I found myself having a renewed reverence for Christianity.

I give thanks for my upbringing, I wouldn't want to change it, but If I'm honest, church, Catholicism, following Jesus has been something I've become distant from. I do not want to pretend that I'm now at a level of relationship and faith like Mum has, but something has changed. Alpha has helped me to say out loud those questions that were, for too many years, buried in my heart. Alpha is the place to share your heart's questions with kind and wonderful humans in a loving and open space. That, to me, is priceless. Let's see what my next stepping stone will be".

Alpha is a key part of our work of evangelisation in the parish. It's run by volunteers generously giving of their time; your financial generosity funds the upkeep of the buildings in which Alpha runs (and our online subscriptions), and supports the hospitality that is an essential part of Alpha.

2021 YEAR END REPORT

	2019	2020	2021
Income	£208,414	£157,052	£158,808
Expenditure	£234,599	£181,293	£193,084
Deficit	£26,185	£24,241	£34,276

Notes:

You will see from the figures our expenditure over the last few years has exceeded our income.

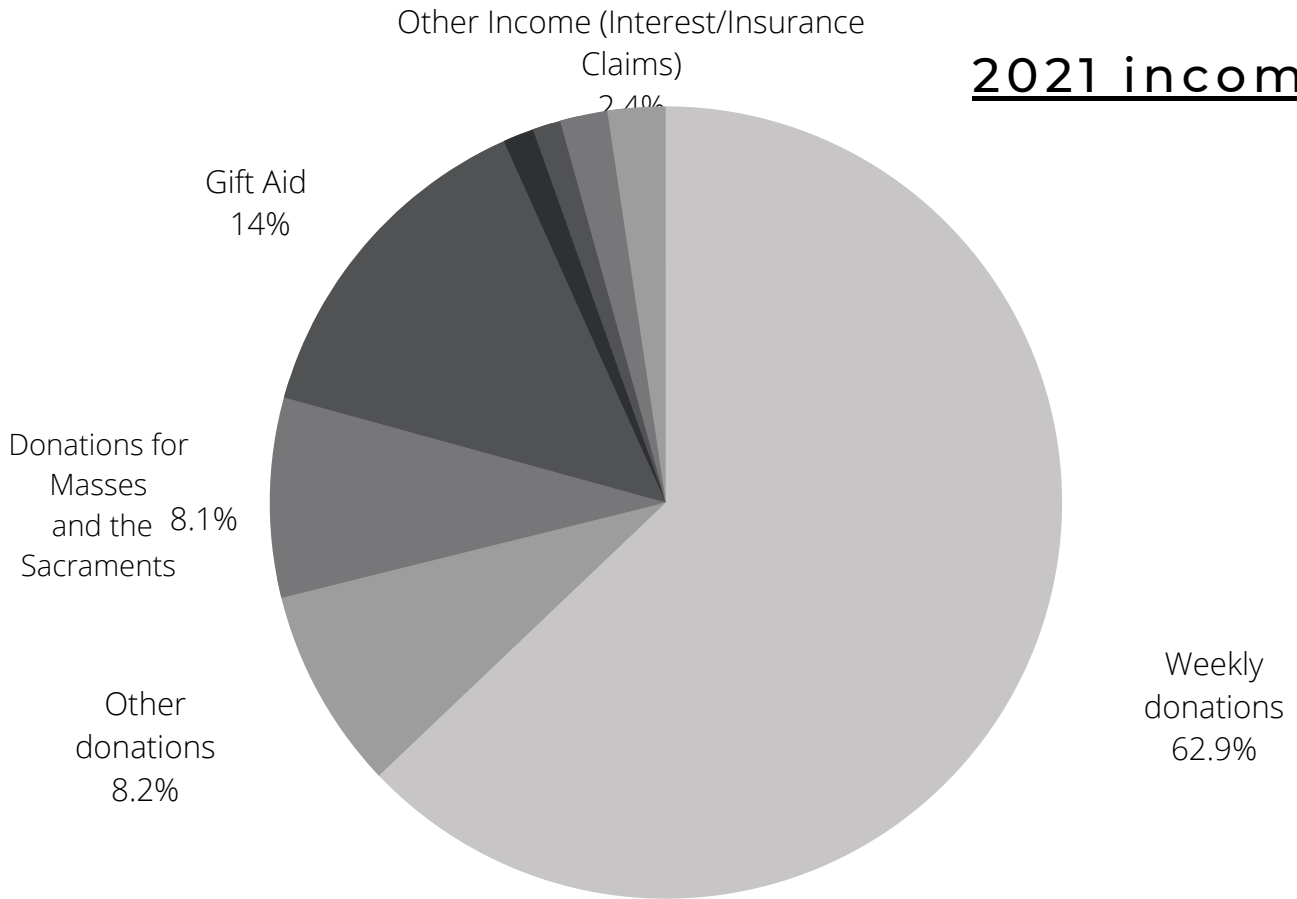
This is unsustainable and is only possible due to reserves gifted to us as a parish over the years. We fully recognise reserves are ideally kept for any unexpected and significant costs that arise from building maintenance, or to fund other significant expenditure regarding mission.

It is also worth noting there is separate to the above income and expenditure associated with the ongoing fabric works in Our Lady of Sorrows church. The vision for this project is to make the space more inviting. A full project specification is due to be published by the sub-committee of parishioners in 2022. This work began with the new audio-visual system which was fitted in early 2022. This project so far has cost £20,130. Covering preparatory surveys, architect fees and interim payments towards new tech equipment (there are more costs for equipment/installation in 2022 to complete the audiovisual installation).

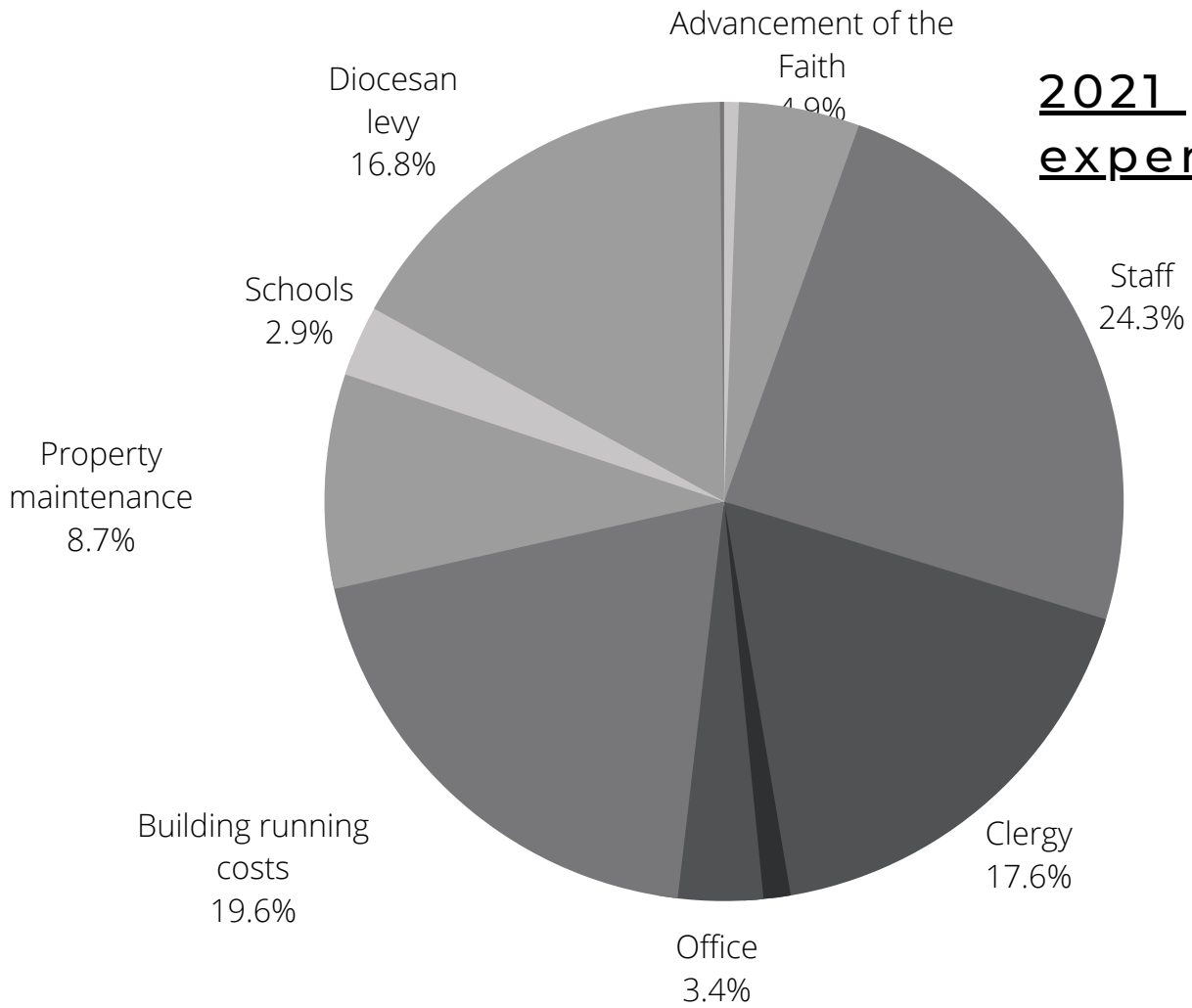
The Finance Committee is plotting a course that hopefully will lead 2022's deficit to be less and in time will lead to a balance.

Note our deficit was bigger in 2021 due overarching income being less, caused by the removal of cash giving and fewer people attending Mass. We were only able to maintain our average deficit of £25k in 2020 due to the furlough scheme.

2021 income



2021 expenditure



THE FRUIT OF OUR GIVING:

Sunday breakfast for those who use local shelters

Hi, if you don't mind I won't share my name. I'm having this typed for me, but I just wanted to say thank you.

I call the shelter up the road home, it won't be for too much longer.

I regularly come for breakfast in your hall on Sundays. It really is a place I feel safe, a place where I feel wanted. I know those who I chat with or those guys in the kitchen aren't paid. You do this because you care. To know that some people don't want anything from me, (I've nothing to give anyway) really means a lot, I can't find words to describe it really.

Keep up the good work, many people in my boat here in Bognor really appreciate what you do.

I know you guys pray for me, keep that up to.

Thanks again.

Every Sunday morning cooked breakfasts are served to those who are homeless. This is a well-used ministry offered free to all those who come. This is only possible thanks to venue that you fund, the fundraising efforts of the breakfast volunteers and your regular giving.

ACCOUNT BALANCES

at the end of financial year 2021

Bank Current Account	£22,533
Bank Building Fund	£3,908
Bank Deposit Account	£70,000
Investment Account	£300,000

WHAT'S THE PLAN FOR 2022?

Our budget for 2022 still has us on course to run at a deficit of £17,000. Growing income is the main task of 2022 we aim to do this by:

- Venue Hire

This is a new income stream, and it is looking likely this will begin to bear some fruit this year.

- Investment income

In 2018, the parish received a very generous legacy. This has, in part, covered the deficits run for the last few years. It has also enabled the recent audio-visual installation in Our Lady of Sorrows. The remainder has been invested and is starting to provide a regular income stream. However, money given to the Church is for its mission, and this legacy should be available to support other opportunities as they arise.

- Reviewing our own stewardship

Later this year, we'll be spending some time thinking about stewardship, thanking God for the gifts we've each received, and reflecting on how we use our time, our treasure, and our talents, in the service of each other and the Gospel. This initiative will encourage an increase in giving in each of these ways.

IF YOU WISH TO REVIEW YOUR GIVING

The Parish Finance Committee meets regularly to review parish finances and looks to increase income through every available means in addition to the giving of individual parishioners.

If now is the time for you to review your giving, the most helpful thing you can do is set up a monthly donation via Standing Order and if possible, Gift Aid. If cash gifts remain your preferred way of giving this is appreciated too.

All your generosity is greatly appreciated, and we are working to put your sacrificial gifts to the best possible use.

You can set up a regular gift via Standing Order at www.bognorcatholicparish.co.uk/donate

Paper forms are available from the Parish Office or at the doors of the Churches