

One of the worst aspects of being a Parish Priest is having to be responsible for Church buildings.

It is a thankless task not least because it involves speaking about money but also that it can seemingly compromise the role of the priest who has been ordained to proclaim the message of Jesus and whose prime responsibility is for the spiritual care and wellbeing of those entrusted to his care. Unfortunately, as good stewards we are expected to do both and as ever our parishes are totally dependent on the generosity of those who value them.

If you are attending Mass, this weekend you will immediately notice a large poster with a thermometer image indicating our challenging financial appeal with a target of £100,000. This we hope to achieve within the next two years in order to deal with our heating system and hopefully have a little leftover for decoration. You will notice that more recently the plaster is also starting to deteriorate in several areas and although this figure is huge even achieving it will not solve all our problems.

Another reason I hate speaking about money is that we are all mindful of the difficulties facing many families here and throughout the world. Families worried about feeding their children and battling to keep a roof over their heads with most of the world's poor surviving on mere scraps. Cafod is a wonderful reminder to us of our duty and responsibility for our brothers and sisters who are in desperate need.

Ultimately, we must each decide how best we help in the various financial challenges we face as we respond to so many charitable appeals. I was reminded recently that if everyone who currently donates to the parish was able to double their giving for two years, we would achieve our £100,000 target. We have already made a start and have £7,000 thanks to various events and personal donations. I am very grateful to everyone who is responding by helping in any way, large or small.

New suggestions are always welcome but one of the best ways

is to make sure you are gift aiding every penny you donate to charity because it represents an extra 25% which we receive from the government, and it costs you nothing and is easy to organize. This weekend there will also be special appeal envelopes which we hope you will return each month. This will help us to differentiate your gift from the normal weekly collection. Could I also ask you to speak to your family and friends and work colleagues who may not attend Holy Family but who might be able to help us maintain our beautiful church. Any lottery winners or millionaires are naturally included!!!!

Please continue to check our website for updates or new information and keep a keen eye on that thermometer.

Lord Jesus, you called money 'that tainted thing' (Lk 16:9) and detested how money changers had taken over your Father's House of Prayer (Jn 2:13ff). Help us to use money and all our resources wisely and grant us your grace not to make the same mistakes. We ask this in your name Christ our Lord.....Amen.

God bless. Fr Kevin