

St Joseph's Parish
PLEASE spare 5 minutes to read this important communication

Dear Fellow Parishioners

It will come as no surprise that, in common with many Parishes and indeed the Diocese as a whole, Parish income this year is almost certainly going to be well down on previous years and whilst our expenditure is also somewhat lower, following various cost saving measures, it is considerably more than that coming in.

This is not a problem confined to churches and other places of worship. Many families are facing job losses, furlough and general income reductions and whilst we all hope and pray for an early return to normality, it appears that the current situation is likely to remain for some time.

This is **not an appeal for increased Offertory giving**; your generous help and support over the years has been truly outstanding! We once again return to the perennial question of **Gift Aid** giving.

As many will know, Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs (HMRC) Gift Aid system of charitable giving is available to all income tax payers, and allows registered charities, like us, to claim a sum equivalent to the basic rate of income tax (currently 20%) on the money so earned and gifted by the donor. This effectively increases the donation by 25p for every £1 given.

Higher and additional rate tax payers can reclaim the difference between their personal rate of tax and the basic rate claimed by the Parish by informing HMRC of their charitable giving when completing their Tax Return; a further Government incentive to aid Charitable giving. For this purpose, we provide information annually, to those subject to higher and additional rate tax, giving details of their total offerings for the previous tax year. Gift Aid applies to all forms of giving whether by monthly standing orders, direct debits or the planned giving envelope scheme. For those unfamiliar with the personal reclaim process, full details are available on HMRC websites.

There is no 'pledge' required with the Gift Aid scheme and you are free to change what you give whenever you like. It is highly confidential, with only our Finance Officer, who is responsible for the administration of the process, aware of individuals offerings. This is, in effect, free money for the parish so, if you pay income tax and are not using the Gift Aid scheme, we urge you to 'sign up'.

Simply go to our website and click on the Donations page, where you will find the gift aid form, direct debit form and our bank details which you can use to set up a standing order. Completed forms should be returned to our Finance Officer, Louise, who can be contacted at maidenheadfo@portsmouthdiocese.org.uk.

Gift Aid is not the only means of boosting Parish income. We are also part of the **Give as you Live** scheme, whereby member retail shopping businesses donate a small percentage of customers' spending to their chosen charity. St Joseph's is registered with **Give as you Live** and if more parishioners signed up, the Parish could be 'earning' hundreds of pounds a year. Online registration is simple and takes a few minutes, go to <https://www.giveasyoulive.com/dashboard> . There are further details included on the Donations page of the website. With more and more of us resorting to online shopping, particularly in this year's run up to Christmas, **Give as you Live** is a further 'painless' way of addressing the shortfall in our Income in these extraordinary times. Sign up here: <https://www.giveasyoulive.com/join/st-josephs-church-maidenhead> Happy Shopping!

Thank you for taking the time to read this letter; please feel free to discuss it with fellow Parishioners and forward it to any whom you feel may not be on the traditional newsletter mailing list.

Finally, no matter how and what you contribute to our blessed and wonderful Parish community, your kindness and generosity is greatly appreciated.

God bless.

Louise Wood
Parish Finance Officer

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