

**ST THOMAS OF CANTERBURY RC CHURCH
ACTION & OVERVIEW NOTES OF PARISH ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING
Friday 26 June 2015**

Held at St Thomas of Canterbury Parish Hall

Meeting opened 7.30pm and closed 9.00pm

Chair: Canon Anthony Charlton

Apologies: Linda Scott; Mary Reynolds; Mary McGillie ;Lesley & Chris Smith; Deacon David

Agenda

1. Parish Financial Reports for the year ended 31 December 2014
2. Review of Parish Ministry Reports for 2014
3. Establishing a Parish Ministry Directory
4. 100 Club
5. The Parish Plan
6. AOB

1. Parish Financial Reports

The full accounts (see appendix **A** to these notes) were prepared and approved by the Parish Finance Committee and were presented at the AGM for transparent communication and any further questions. The key points to underline in the accounts have been brought out in the separate written report that is in the Ministry Reports (discussed under item 3 & see appendix **B**).

Thanks were particularly given to:

- The Gift Aid Scheme - very ably administered by Cyril Scott - for the increase in Gift Aid donations; a balance has been achieved and built on with new people managing to be signed up to replace those who have left the scheme; about 60% of giving now is Gift Aided
- The Repository sales show a healthy increase - a valuable reminder of what the shop offers as well as being a window of our parish world to the whole of Canterbury
- The Organ Fund has recently received a generous donation from our Syro-Malabar community in the Parish; thank you

Areas for Potential Improvement:

- The Weekly Mass Collections in the plate have decreased slightly but this is a difficult indicator as our congregation does have a relatively large element of transient attendees
- Social Events, Fêtes & Bazaars: more could be done here and it would help the Parish not just financially but as a community coming together as well as the productive "community of communities" we already have
- Use of the Parish Hall; all agreed this could be used wider to generate income

Questions:

- Clarification was given on the loan to Fr Valentine to buy his car
- Catholic Newspaper & Publications: this accounts entry was queried as to how much supplied the Repository (and therefore gave a true indicator of the profit made there) and how much was to supply other sources such as the Catholic newspapers on sale in the narthex
 - **ACTION POINT:** Canon Anthony would ask the Finance Committee to give a breakdown of this entry

2. Parish Ministry Reports

The Ministry reports that were submitted were circulated (see appendix X to these notes for the full reports). The reports are only a fraction of what goes on in the Parish but show a committed and prayerful worshipping community.

Canon Anthony gave heartfelt thanks to **all** who work in our Parish Ministries.

Specific comments were made as follows:

- Many were surprised and delighted to read how well attended and active is the St Thomas Scout Group - very good work by all involved to have built this community up and to maintain its growth and involvement with the Parish
- The SVP is a small but highly effective and locally respected team particularly when asked to support last minute requests from desperate people
- Christians Together Canterbury (CTC) illustrates our Parish ecumenical prince with other Christian Communities in Canterbury - John Renn is looking for a fellow liaison officer to share the work with him
- Welcoming all who attend Mass at St Thomas' is a service much appreciated by our visitors - this Ministry also would appreciate more people willing to volunteer to smile and greet all who come to Mass
- The APF red boxes are a small but vital contributor to our wider connection to the Mill Hill Mission and this has increased in number but again could do with more box holders
- The First Reconciliation and Holy Communion Programme has been very successful in the format used in 2015 and will be built on for 2016; a similar success was also achieved with Fr Valentine leading the Confirmation candidates this year

Other Reports are from:

- the Church Shop (mentioned in the financial accounts too)
- Our Polish Community at St Thomas'
- The Breakfast Mass group
- the Scripture Group

Specific Discussion

The issue was raised and debated of how our Parish supports the Canterbury Winter Night Shelter (run on a Friday night throughout the months of December, January and February). Last year saw the lowest number of volunteers ever and it was doubtful we could offer a sanctuary in 2015 unless more volunteers were obtained. The general consensus was that people did not know what this volunteering involved and perhaps put a worst case scenario implication on what it was asking for and therefore did not volunteer. Janet Scott spoke of the work she does running this for our Parish and Roberta Johnson spoke of the experience of the visit to Catching Lives (opposite Canterbury East station) by some parishioners a few months ago.

Outcome:

- (a) it was agreed that a communication would be made at Masses in person and on paper to tell people of exactly what this Ministry sets out to do and what it entails; this would be done some months in advance of december to give people time to reflect and find out more
- (b) Ben Saul (Director of Music) offered the services of his your band - Janet felt if they were at least 14 years of age and mature and sensible they would be ideal to work with as part of this Ministry team

3. Parish Ministry Directory

Canon Anthony spoke of the need to establish a Parish directory that not only gave a full picture of all that went on in the Parish but also names and contact numbers so people knew how to get involved with ministries that may be of interest to them. This is particularly needed for people new to the Parish (the new parish Priest would have welcomed it!)

A draft of the Directory will start to be worked on next week and will be circulated for completion by the end of July 2015. at the moment we don't know what we don't know so need to get everyone to celebrate and demonstrate what we do!

4. 100 Club

Canon Anthony gave much thanks for the cheque for £1000 that this club has donated from its funds. he will be using this to start the World Youth Day 2016.

Fr Valentine and Canon Anthony organised the draw and 4 winners of £250 each were drawn from the box. They were:

1. Margaret Butchers No 42
 2. Tom Hill No 47
 3. Mary McGillie No78
 4. Phillipa and Ian Burniston No 96
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5. Parish Plan

Canon Anthony introduced this agenda item explaining that he and Fr Valentine wanted to hear from all parishioners what they wanted from their Parish of St Thomas of Canterbury over the next 10 years. The goal was the vision for the 150th anniversary in 2025 but there would be many goals on the way to be achieved to meet the needs - and dreams of the whole parish community.

The priests had a meeting a few weeks ago, facilitated by Tessa Metcalfe who gave a brief presentation of the outcome of the meeting at the AGM.

The slides can be seen on the Parish Website initially at:

<http://stthomasofcanterbury.com/stthomas/>

and paper copies will be made available for those who cannot access the website.

A general and lively discussion took place on:

- (a) the whole idea of having a 10 year Parish Plan
- (b) the use of a parish survey/questionnaire in order to ensure as many people are engaged and consulted initially at the start of the thinking for the Parish Plan

Key Points made:

- the concept of a survey/questionnaire was agreed by a show of hands with rightful caveats on the work this could entail and how people would respond to this. Comments were also made on using Action Research as a potential model. Fr Valentine stressed this was just a "starter for ten" and people would have more time and space to comment at a Parish Forum that would be held after the questionnaire was issued. Requests were made to keep it as simple as possible with not too many questions.

Outcome

- It was agreed that a draft questionnaire/survey would be produced and circulated to a small but diverse group of parishioners to start with for feedback.
 - **ACTION POINT:** Tessa Metcalfe to draft questionnaire & survey & circulate in the next week
- The need to meet the spiritual needs - perhaps through spiritual direction and discernment - was raised so we reflected an authentic church that played its part in how the Roman Catholic church has been asked to embrace change by Pope Francis (Evangelii Gaudium and Laudato Si)
- The need to hear the priests "talk from the pulpit" on where the church - and our parish within that church - should be heading towards; Is it alright with Father? Can we try new ideas?
- There is a Music Archive that the Director of Music wants to mine for new ideas for our music
- The many cultural communities that make up our Parish Community are a major strength - we all come together in the Mass (which also raises the question from each individual "Why are We Here at Mass?") but each Mass has its own identity and that in itself creates other communities - could we work more effectively together or does it work well enough now? Is this what is meant by Fellowship?

More practical thoughts were:

- we need a better developed social calendar in the Parish with fund raising as a community
 - the Parish hall needs doing up and using more efficiently - to generate income but also to weld us together as more of a community
 - the Parish database (once it is reviewed and completed) could create a Parish e-mail circulation list to ensure communication is improved and more effectively disseminated
 - the Parish website; is vastly improved from what it was but could do even more. Can we tap into the skill and expertise of the senior school pupils to help with this
 - can the Parish Newsletter for 2 weeks be left on the website - this generated an idea of a service calendar that could be shown on the website and archived
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6. AOB

No AOB and the meeting closed with prayer

Tessa Metcalfe
2 July 2015

APPENDIX A

ST THOMAS OF CANTERBURY RC PARISH CHURCH

ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2014

INCOME

	2014	2013
<u>Covenantable Ordinary receipts</u>		
Weekly Mass Collections	89,820.69	91,689.12
Christmas & Easter Offerings	8,031.81	8,045.84
Gift Aid Tax Refund	14,819.26	12,496.67
Total Covenantable Ordinary receipts	<u>112,671.76</u>	<u>112,231.63</u>
<u>Non-Covenantable Ordinary Receipts</u>		
Dividends on diocesan investments	520.20	514.76
Repository Sales	15,447.42	12,379.31
Votive Candles	9,061.32	9,276.47
Rents from hall and short term presbytery lettings	8,420.00	10,210.00
Chaplaincies	2,042.85	4,796.22
Catholic Newspapers & Publications	2,891.45	2,849.28
Fêtes & Bazaars	—	3,201.71
100 Club	1,000.00	1,000.00
Total Non-Covenantable Ordinary Receipts	<u>39,383.24</u>	<u>44,227.75</u>
<u>Other Recurring Income</u>		
Diocesan special collections	3,088.96	3,734.40
Cafod	3,442.54	3,275.52
Parish second collections & poor box	1,956.66	2,334.30
Total Special Collections & Donations	<u>8,488.16</u>	<u>9,344.22</u>
<u>Appeals and other Non-Recurring Income</u>		
Organ Fund	5,382.77	9,276.92
Special Donations	8,418.69	6,151.98
Legacy	43,266.98	13,745.01
Total Non-Recurring Income	<u>57,068.44</u>	<u>29,173.91</u>
TOTAL INCOME	217,611.60	194,977.51

NB - the accounts are based on cash receipts and payments in the year not on an accruals basis - the assets and liabilities are disclosed below

	<u>2014</u>	<u>2013</u>
Bank & Cash @ 31 December	77,206.88	45,412.48
Investments With Diocese	19,022.83	19,022.83
Loan To Clergy	4,900.00	—
Repository Stock	2,437.99	2,717.83
Creditors	(6,635.82)	(1,052.34)
General Fund	<u>96,931.88</u>	<u>66,100.80</u>

EXPENDITURE

	2014	2013
<u>Church & presbytery Direct Costs</u>		
Church Supplies & Consumables	6,810.48	15,224.06
Church repairs & maintenance	23,685.39	24,725.28
House food & household expenses	7,597.77	6,660.63
House repairs & maintenance	9,696.13	2,321.87
House furniture & equipment	7,872.86	—
Heat & Light	14,343.16	16,780.29
Property Insurance, Council Tax & Water	10,559.73	9,863.97
Telephone, stationery, postage	2,991.26	8,859.90
Total Direct Costs	<u>83,556.78</u>	<u>84,436.00</u>
Personnel		
Staff Wages: domestic help	4,560.12	8,093.34
Staff other wages: including national insurance	27,160.12	24,804.75
Christmas & Easter Offerings paid to clergy	5,634.74	8,683.51
Approved remuneration for clergy	2,000.00	—
Car Allowances & travel expenses	1,032.66	2,764.41
Cost to parish for supply priests	985.00	2,878.24
Clergy in-service training (incl retreats & suppt groups)	175.00	205.00
Parish catechesis - lay training	171.65	3,898.12
Total personnel costs	<u>41,719.29</u>	<u>51,327.37</u>
Other Costs		
Catholic Newspapers & Publications	6,250.62	4,811.25
Hall Expenses	1,642.54	3,176.09
Parish Activities & Celebrations	1,436.37	—
Repository Expenses	10,024.98	7,976.03
Payment of Special Collections & Appeals	4,423.77	2,946.68
Payment from Poor Box Donations	502.76	565.84
CSAS Safeguarding Assessment	298.65	305.58
Car Loan to clergy	4,900.00	—
Sundry other payments	1,213.80	(1,208.06)
Total Other Costs	<u>30,693.49</u>	<u>18,573.41</u>
Diocesan Payments		
Diocesan development Fund	20,900.00	19,900.00
Bishop's Fund	1,810.00	2,000.00
Clergy Support Fund	5,083.00	10,166.00
Diocesan Second Collections Paid Over	3,017.96	3,033.34
Total Diocesan Payments	<u>30,810.96</u>	<u>35,099.34</u>
TOTAL EXPENDITURE	186,780.52	189,436.12

APPENDIX B

ST THOMAS OF CANTERBURY RC PARISH CHURCH

MINISTRY REPORTS FOR THE YEAR 2014/15

St Thomas of Canterbury Parish, Canterbury

Ministry Reports Submitted for the AGM – 26th June 2015

16th. Canterbury (St. Thomas') Scout Group **Year 2014/2015 - Group Scout Leaders Report for all Sections**

Our Scout Group remains one of the largest Groups in the local District, our numbers at the moment are healthy. We have at the moment just over 100 young members, aged from 6 - 18 years old, we meet every Thursday at St Thomas Church hall during term time, this comes from thankfully having a band of dedicated Leaders with a balanced programme, a good executive team and of course the support of the parents and Church.

We have many activities going on during the year for all sections and there is just so many events we cannot possibly report on them all like Camping, Hiking, St Georges Day Parade, Swimming Galas, which we won the District Trophy, Group Firework Evening, Pantomime visit, Skiing, quiz nights, Cycling, visit to Thorpe Park, Quad biking, Crazy Golf, Prussicking, Shooting, Archery, Paint balling, Parties, visits out to wonderful places and earning lots of Badges.

Church Parades are part of the Scout ethos but also demonstrate our appreciation to St. Thomas' Church for the support the Church gives especially in the provision of the Hall for our meetings and the availability of storage space both for the weekly running of the Group and the secure facilities for all our camping equipment. For both our main Summer camps we were very lucky to have Canon David come out to join us and say Mass for us in the beautiful surroundings where we camp.

Scouting needs good Leaders to maintain the original ideals of our founder, Baden-Powell and to provide the challenge for all our young people. This Scouting challenge is there for all our young people and we hope that this is accepted and leads to the well-rounded development of our youngsters and ultimately to the good citizens of the future.

Pam Johnson

Group Scout Leader

Polish Community at the St. Thomas' RC Church

All activities of the Polish community group at the St. Thomas' in 2015/16 were organised by the committee of the Polish Association in Kent (PAK). Every second Sunday of the month at 4pm, the Mass in Polish is celebrated at St Thomas'. This is followed by a meeting at 5pm for tea/coffee and nibbles.

PAK was established in 1984 by a group of Polish residents in Kent, under the leadership of the late Mr Marian Turło and then Dr Kazimierz Krynicki. The main objective of PAK was maintaining the Polish language and culture. Our mission today is not only to maintain but also share our traditions and culture through the active involvement in the life of our local community.

We coordinate the service for the Polish Mass at the St. Thomas'. Father Andrzej Błażkiewicz has kindly been assisting our community since March 2014. Every day, he works at St. Ethelbert and Gertrude catholic parish in Ramsgate, Father Andrzej organized Advent and Lenten retreats that took place in the Hall. He invited inspirational speakers Frs Robert Nęcek and Józef Partyka.

On a Holy Saturday, a blessing of the food was held at the Hall, a very well attended and fondly observed Polish custom. We would like to thank Cannon Anthony and Father Valentine for their welcome and kind support. Best

regards go to Anna for her continuous support. We also wish to thank Andrzej the Caretaker for his assistance during our events in March and April.

Marta Gocek,

SVP

We are extremely grateful to the Parish, who through the generosity of Door Collections have raised £4288 for our work. Seventy-five per cent of this total has been spent on direct practical assistance to families and individuals living in our Parish. We also regularly support two SVP Conferences in India. This year our Christmas Party was entirely paid for by a local company, to whom we are greatly indebted.

FOOD BANK: once again our Parish has shown great generosity in gifts of food, which we pass on to Canterbury Food Bank for distribution. It is almost two years since the Yellow Bins appeared at Sunday Masses and each week we take the equivalent of a fully loaded, large supermarket trolley to the Food Bank Depot.

The clients and referrals that we have of families in crisis directly benefit as we are able to give them Food Bank Vouchers, as well as making up emergency parcels ourselves. There is, of course, more to this than a mere handout. Recipients are invariably deeply embarrassed to find themselves in this situation and so appreciate that what is given comes from other people who have a genuine concern for their welfare. Recently while we were talking to a mother, her young son drew a card. Without saying anything to his mother, he gave it to us as we were leaving. It showed all the members of his family and the message said 'thank you - we were hungry'.

An extension this year has been to donate specific items to Catching Lives. A small group from SVP visited the Centre - an impressive facility now open 7 days a week - last month. We hope that closer working relations between us will be of benefit in particular to those living within our Parish, but sleeping on the streets or in temporary, insecure accommodation.

Christians Together Canterbury (CTC)

CTC brings together Christians from the churches in Canterbury. The common projects are Christian Unity Week (18th to 25th each January), the Good Friday Walk of Witness, Street Pastors, the Food Bank and other new/one off projects. There is a website, www.together.ourchurchweb.org.uk/canterbury/ and this is a useful means of sharing information. The monthly "Representatives Meetings" take place on Friday mornings and Wednesday evenings. The Wednesday meeting was to help, those who work, attend meetings. The irony for me is that I can attend on Friday mornings but I work Wednesday evenings! This being the case I would like to find someone who could share this role of liaison between our parish community and the other Christian Communities in Canterbury. Any offers! I am not young so someone young or in mid-life would be good!!!

I would encourage all of us to have the desire to have contact with other Christians in whatever way we can. If you have suggestions/ideas, please contact me. My contact details can be obtained from the Parish Office.

John Renn, Parish Representative for Christians Together Canterbury

ST. THOMAS' CHURCH SHOP

The Church Shop continues to serve the needs of the Parish, as well as Parishes and religious communities from surrounding areas. In fact we are now the only remaining Christian shop (apart from the Cathedral) in Canterbury, following the closure of C.L.C. As well as the usual supply of Missals, Catholic Bibles, Prayer Books & Rosaries, we stock a good selection of Cards for many occasions, and Gifts prove to be popular. Books and VATICAN Publications are available. The recent Encyclical LAUDATO SI, will be available shortly, and looks to be in demand.

The number of volunteers has been reduced recently to just 5, therefore to keep the shop open every day has been unrealistic. The recent appeal for more volunteers ,through the Church notices,has thankfully produced some results, although more are welcome! To work in the shop is a wonderful opportunity to bear witness to our Faith. To have the time and space to be a listener, to share in the joys and sorrows of the people we meet daily, is an added dimension to ministry within the Church Shop.

The Financial contribution to the Church funds has been in the region of £5000 annually, and hopefully this will continue in 2015.

Judith Roser (Volunteer)

Breakfast Mass Group

After 7.30am Mass each Wednesday we meet in the upper Room for a simple breakfast. Everyone welcome.

Scripture Group

After midday Mass on Thursdays we meet in the Upper Room to discuss the liturgy for the following Sunday. We bring a packed lunch but tea, coffee and biscuits are provided! In a friendly atmosphere all are welcome to join us.

First Reconciliation and Holy Communion Programme 2015

This year the preparation programme was led by Fr. Anthony and supported by four catechists; Mary Reynolds, Mary Mc Geary, Kathleen Kerr and Annie Keane. Children followed the preparation programme, "Jesus Comes to Me" published by St. Pauls. Lessons were scheduled for Sunday morning at 9am so that the children could also take part in the 9.30 Parish Mass.

Forty-two children took part in the programme, thirty-eight of whom made their First Reconciliation and Holy Communion at St. Thomas'. The remaining four children returned to family parishes in India and Poland. First Communion day was celebrated on Sunday May 10th 2015 and the Going Forth Mass the following week.

It was a privilege for us to support the children on this part of their faith journey and we look forward to next year when we will be starting afresh with "I Belong", a Redemptorist publication. This programme was used at St. Thomas' in previous years.

The celebration of First Communion 2016 will take place on Sunday 1st May and the Going Forth Mass on Sunday 8th May.

APF Red Boxes

The Association for the Propagation of the Faith Red Box scheme collects donations to support the Mill Hill missionaries, the only English Catholic missionary society, and to directly aid various Catholic dioceses and projects in needy parts of the world.

In August the parish held a membership drive to recruit new supporters. This was run by Father Dennis Treacy, a retired Mill Hill missionary. (since deceased, RIP). With Father Treacy's help, the number of red Box holders in the parish more than doubled, although it is still small. If you would like to become a supporter of this important missionary work, please contact me.

In 2014, the contributions from the Red Box holders in St Thomas of Canterbury parish came to £1068. Some of this was Gift aided and so our total gift to the missions was much greater. Thanks to everyone concerned!

Tony Grace
APF Red Box Local Secretary

Welcoming Ministry

The Welcoming Ministry was re-launched in the Parish through a series of workshops in January 2013. Unfortunately the level of response for volunteers was not high but a small and committed group of people have managed to cover most Sunday Masses with some kind of Welcoming service. For the Sunday 11am, the Ministry also remains responsible for organising the offertory collection and procession and this manages to be covered each week. A rota is given out for the 9.30am and 11.00am Sunday Masses at least 3 months in advance so people know when they are asked to welcome.

In an attempt to persuade new members to join, a flyer was attached to the Weekly Parish Newsletter in February 2015 which elicited one enquiry via email who in turn did not pursue their interest. No reason given. One extra person has since signed on for the 9.30 Mass.

The teams that do cover this ministry manage to give sterling service most weeks and a friendly, collaborative attitude has arisen. People not on the rota also help ad hoc at some Masses which is encouraging. As usual, feedback from visitors indicates that people do value our services.

As in previous years, many of our Welcomers also do other Ministries such as Readers, Eucharistic Ministry etc and cannot do the Welcoming service at the same time. The scarcity of resource means that much falls on the same people.

In the coming year, it is hoped that the consultations for the Parish Plan will give greater understanding of why people seem so reluctant to offer their help for this satisfying and needed Ministry - at the moment it is a bit of a mystery!

Thank you to all who help with the Welcoming Ministry (and the offertory collection and procession) each Saturday and Sunday - it's all being noted somewhere I'm sure.

Tessa Metcalfe

ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2014 (and see appendix A for details)

The following notes provide additional information in respect of key balances in the accounts or differences versus 2013 levels of income/expenditure.

Covenantable Ordinary Receipts

St Thomas' congregation includes a large number of students and visitors. The weekly mass collections decreased by £1,868 but this decrease was offset by an increase of £2,323 in the gift aid tax refund.

The gift aid refund is paid in arrears and as such the income received in 2014 related to the 2013 mass collections – approximately 65% of all collections having been gift aided. Donations can be of any amount and they do not need to be of a fixed frequency so by signing the forms donors can ensure the church obtains a substantial addition from HMRC.

Non-Covenantable Ordinary Receipts

There has been a decrease of £4,844 in non-covenantable ordinary receipts principally arising from a decrease in income from hall lettings of £2,615 and a decrease of £3,201 in income from fete's and bazaars. These are valuable sources of revenue which we hope can once again be realised through support from new volunteers.

Repository sales increased by £3,068 and the net contribution after repository expenses had been deducted increased by £1,019.

Special Collections

These sums are collected for specific purposes and are then remitted through other expenses. There was a timing difference between the collection and onward remittance of these balances in both 2013 and 2014.

Appeals and Non-recurring Income

The parish has received significant income in the form of legacies and donations in both 2013 and 2014 which have helped to fund significant repair and maintenance work in the church and the presbytery.

Church & Presbytery Direct Costs

During the year £9,669 was spent on essential roofing repairs and a further £8,125 on the sound system in the church.

Personnel

These payments are in respect of the administrator, caretaker, musical director, church cleaner and housekeeper together with approved remuneration for the clergy.

Other costs

During the year the parish has provided a loan to Fr Valentine of £4,900 to part fund the purchase of a car.

Diocesan Payments

These are assessments made by the Diocese – the largest of which is levied with reference to the Parishes income from mass collections for the previous year. The payment levied in 2014 increased by £1,000 but the levy in respect of the clergy support fund decreased by £5,083 so that overall payments made to the diocese decreased by £4,289 versus 2013.

Mass stipends and stole fees -These are directly payable to the clergy and are not included in the accounts reported.

Glenda Flanagan
Parish Accountant