



Alive in Faith

*Building a Sure Foundation for the Mission
of Our Diocese*

Alive in Faith

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Frequently Asked Questions

The Vision

1. What is the vision for our Diocese?

Bishop Hopes' vision for the future of our Church in East Anglia is to have:

- † Seminarians who are well formed, and clergy who are supported when they step down from active ministry
- † Strong and vibrant parishes that are addressing local needs
- † Programmes of outreach to help those who are most vulnerable in our communities

2. What is *Alive in Faith*?

Alive in Faith is a diocesan-wide, fundraising initiative that will provide resources to help build a sure foundation for the future of our Diocese and our parishes. The campaign commenced following a comprehensive consultative phase, gathering opinions from both clergy and laity across our Diocese.

3. Why is it called *Alive in Faith*?

Here in East Anglia we are alive in faith: we have a desire and commitment to grow and build our Church. As we focus on the future work and mission of the Diocese we must provide the resources, both pastorally and financially, to strengthen our faith communities, now and in the years ahead. This special initiative will help us to fulfil this.

Alive in Faith

4. Who will be asked to support the campaign?

Alive in Faith is a Catholic collective effort. Every parishioner will have the opportunity to learn more about the campaign, to ask questions and to consider how they can join those already involved, in a way that is right for them and their families. By learning about the plans we have for our future in a personal way, it is hoped that everyone will be able to make an informed decision regarding their support. It is not expected that all parishioners will want to be involved or be able to do so.

5. How will my parish benefit?

Parishes benefit greatly on two levels. Firstly, as part of the wider Diocesan family, funds will be used to support our seminarians – God willing the priests of the future, clergy who have dedicated their lives to the priesthood and served our parishes for the last 40 - 50 years, and social outreach initiatives within our local communities.

Secondly, a progressive share formula means that the more a parish raises, the more it keeps to support its own local projects. These could include the completion of existing capital projects to the commencement of new ones, or sustained investments in people. Parish goals are determined by two-times a parish's annual regular income, taken from an average of the last three years.

6. Are funds raised through *Alive in Faith* separate to existing Diocesan funds?

All funds that are raised are separate and distinct from current Diocesan funds. Gifts and pledges to *Alive in Faith* are ring-fenced and can be used only for the purposes set out in campaign materials and for the specific local parish projects identified. A Campaign Advisory Committee (made up of clergy and laity drawn from across the Diocese) has been established to ensure a high level of transparency, accountability and communication. This group is guided by formal campaign policies that govern the expenditure of monies.

The Diocese

7. Is the Diocese financially viable?

Yes. We are planning for the future as we anticipate the need for increased funding requirements in a number of priority areas. For example, eight seminarians are currently in formation, with an additional two men recently accepted to begin their studies. In addition, over the next 10 years, more than 20 priests will reach the age of 75 and it is our collective responsibility to ensure that their accommodation and daily expenditure needs are met.

8. Why can't assets be sold?

Most of the property belongs to individual parishes and all major buildings are used for pastoral activities or to generate rental income. The Diocese does, of course, review investment options but property that is sold is lost to future generations.

9. How will the campaign affect current collections?

Alive in Faith asks parishioners to make pledges above and beyond their regular giving. Parishioners are not asked to diminish giving to their parishes, rather to consider a greater commitment to the Church. Parishes who participate tend not to see a negative impact on offertory. In fact, some see an increase. This can be attributed to parishioners strengthening their understanding of the Church, its operation and a greater awareness of the collective financial need.

Funding and Gift Administration

10. How will funds be distributed?

Six months after a parish completes its efforts, it can begin to apply for its share of monies received in cash. A parish can then draw upon funds quarterly. All applications for funds will be approved by the Campaign Advisory Committee.

11. Why emphasise pledges?

Alive in Faith encourages pledging because it allows individuals and families the opportunity to consider larger commitments than they could usually make in a one-off donation. It also helps with long-term planning.

12. How are suggested gift levels determined?

To be able to undertake local projects and share in the wider Diocesan responsibilities, we know that a wide range of gifts will be needed in every parish. A suggested gift amount provides direction and a sense of the level of support required to reach the financial target. In considering these amounts, the focus is on what the parish requires to reach its financial goal, rather than what a parishioner can or cannot afford. We have no way of knowing what any parishioner can give. Some will want to pledge more, others less. The decision to support *Alive in Faith* is a personal and private one.

13. Why not divide the goal by the number of parishioners?

It certainly would be easier. However, it definitely would not be fairer and would ensure that a parish does not reach its goal. Because people are blessed differently, a principle of *Alive in Faith* is equal sacrifice, not equal giving. If we receive pledges based on personal ability – by challenging all to give as they are able and according to their blessings – parishes will achieve their objective.

14. Why am I being asked to complete a pledge form?

You are asked to complete a pledge form so that it may be appropriately recorded, acknowledged by the *Alive in Faith* office and (when appropriate) Gift Aid may be obtained. Practical information includes the total pledge, frequency and length of payments, and the preferred start date.

15. What if my financial situation changes?

Parishioners are asked to sign a pledge form as a good faith commitment. However, this is not a legally binding document. If your circumstances change, simply notify the campaign office and inform them if you wish to pause, increase, decrease or cancel your pledge.

16. Will my gift remain confidential?

Yes. The only people who will know your pledge details are your parish priest, the volunteer administrator who records all gifts at the parish and the Diocese campaign office. All information will be kept confidential.

17. Why can't we conduct the fundraising ourselves?

Most successful diocesan fundraising campaigns are conducted in partnership with experienced firms. The Diocese does not need long-term, full-time resources, rather we require specific support and expertise for a limited period.

18. How much is this costing?

In line with other diocesan campaigns, we anticipate an investment of 12p to raise £1. This is lower than typical costs in the charitable sector where they range from 15p to 20p. The more success we have, the overall cost will decrease. Commission is not being paid to any external suppliers or for professional support.

19. Who is paying for the campaign?

The costs are being paid through a combination of unrestricted legacy income and a portion of the Gift Aid on pledges to the campaign.

20. How will I be kept updated on how my support is making a difference?

All parishioners will be updated through regular communication from the Diocese. *Alive in Faith* newsletters, a dedicated webpage and updates at parish level will ensure that parishioners are fully informed on the impact that their gift is having within our Diocese.