

To All Serving Clergy, Churchwardens and Treasurers

19th March 2020

Dear Colleagues,

Parish share and Finances

I, along with Bishop Christopher and our colleagues, am well aware of the challenges you and others are experiencing at home and at work in the present circumstances. As I write now about some of the practical issues we are facing in the parishes and the diocese we assure you of our prayers and our intention to work together as closely as possible for the wellbeing of the communities we serve in Jesus' name.

There has been much to digest over the past days and plans are having to continuously evolve. We appreciate too the challenges you are all facing at parish level and all the steps you are taking to respond to our current situation and the Archbishop's call to do church differently.

We are currently working to reassess the budget for 2020 in the light of the current restrictions. Our current aim is that staff will be enabled to work for as long as is possible, and home working is the norm. This is so parishes and schools are supported in all that they are facing at this time. We ask that churches do what they can to continue to contribute towards parish share as you will appreciate that our main and most significant costs in relation to stipends and staff costs continue and therefore to maintain these, without raising financial fears for our clergy and paid lay staff, we are reliant on cashflow. We, in turn, are seeking financial support from the National Church and they too are still working out what might be possible. It is only when we have this information that we will be in a position to give a more definitive answer as to parish share relief.

Thank you for our patience and cooperation. We will give you more definite advice and information as soon as possible and ask that in the meanwhile you continue to support the ongoing ministry of your parish and help us to sustain the work of our clergy and staff.

With best wishes



Victoria James

Diocesan Secretary