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 **THE CHURCH
OF ENGLAND**
Diocese of Leeds

Dear Friends

I want to start with a big thank you to all those who give their money generously, individually and through their parishes, which pays the parish share. I know that for many that is very challenging.

Your parish share not only supports the clergy you see week in and week out, but also supports 310 clergy and curates right across the diocese. Share ensures we can provide them with suitable housing. Share lets us provide training, resources and guidance to over 32,000 worshipers in 441 parishes. Share enabled over 10,000 life events in our parishes last year alone.

Parish Share has a far reaching impact.

For every £100 that the diocese receives in parish share, it spends £133 on paying for clergy and ministry. Your parish share is vital for sustaining ministry and mission across the Diocese of Leeds.

But we face a very real challenge. Parish share income has fallen by £1.5 million since 2019. At the same time, costs associated with parish ministry and the maintenance of clergy housing have increased by roughly the same amount of £1.5 million, due to the increased cost of living and materials. The Diocese cannot continue to spend significantly more than we can bring in.

At the root of Christian giving is a very simple dynamic. God has given to us freely in Jesus Christ, and our response in gratitude is to give not only of our spirit, of our discipleship, but also with our material gifts, including money. A generous culture is essential in the church, for reflecting the nature of the God whom we worship and who calls us, but also practically, to enable our churches to develop sustainable and long-term ministry.

I know continued generosity is a challenge, but it's a challenge we need to meet. I want to encourage parishes to build a generous church, rooted in growing generous discipleship of individuals, letting us do what we believe we are called to do. But if we believe in doing it, we need to pay for it.

Alongside this letter the PCC have received the share request for 2024 and a guide which provides a bit more detail on where the money goes. Please do ask to see it if you want to know more. I am encouraging everyone, both personally and as part of your parish community, to think about our shared purpose in building a generous church. You may want to talk with your PCC about your plans for next year and your response to the share request.

I am extremely grateful for those who give sacrificially. We could not do any of this without you.

Thank you.

The Rt Revd Nicholas Baines
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