

Dear friend of Christchurch Gratot and Virey,

A message from your Wardens

At the Chaplaincy AGM last weekend, we presented you all with an action plan and a financial target. Our aim was to gain your approval to begin the process of appointing a priest at the meeting with the archdeacon in May. We believe that both the churches have done well in surviving an extended vacancy period and we are optimistic for our future prospects. But, as in all things, there are snags and you need to be aware of how we plan to overcome them

The first thing was to explain the 2 choices which confront us :

- **Option A** - To proceed to look for a new priest immediately, but accepting that we might have to raise additional funds within the next 2 years to cover the third year. This is necessary to convince the diocese that we will be financially viable for the usual 3 year contract. This latter requires a leap of faith and commitment from the whole of our church.

OR

- **Option B** - To wait until our finances are more robust so that we could 'employ' a priest in one or two years time. This is the safer option, but would be a real disappointment to many in both congregations and could affect the general morale of the whole church

These options were discussed in some depth and we were delighted to announce the result of an informal ballot of the members present, which was that nearly all of you supported the first option.

All that remains now is to put the words into action !

One very important aspect of this plan is commitment. We know that very few of us has access to substantial sums of money, especially after the financial problems of the last few years. However this is a project endorsed on behalf of us all at the AGM and we should back it in whatever way we can, so we can proceed, and all feel involved. Everyone's support is valuable, large or 'less large'. If, for example, someone gave up the equivalent of a cup of coffee (and maybe a piece of cake!) every day, and donated the accruing sum this would add up to around €1000 in one year ! We could use a lot of these 'coffee pledges'! Another quick calculation shows that if just 40 people (or couples) increased their giving by 10 € per week, the result would total 20k € - and that is the sum we need - think about it !

On the attached pledge form, you will see various means by which you could help this project. We do urge you to think very carefully how you could help, and to pray for guidance and inspiration. Then complete the form and send it or pass it in complete confidence to either of us, your wardens.

Finally – an appeal for unity. We realise that some people did not support the decision to proceed, and there will be others who cannot afford to do so at present. But this is a commitment to support the church when and if it becomes necessary. If you are able to support us immediately by gift or loan, then we will welcome it of course, but otherwise we need to know that that you can and will support the church when and if it is needed – and that means we will only ask for such support if it is truly necessary.

As it says in the Tesco ad – 'every little helps.....'! And make no mistake about this – if, as we believe, this is the will of God – it **will** go ahead.

Yours very sincerely,

Humph and Paul

CHRISTCHURCH Gratot and Virey

The church has decided in principle to raise funds through pledges to support the appointment of a new priest – what will happen next ? First of all, any previous loans will be repaid in full to their donors.

Next, in order to plan financially, we need to establish that the funds committed will be adequate for the purpose. The church does not ask you to write a cheque at this moment; but we do need to list the funds which will be available if and when necessary. Our cash flow estimate shows a probable need for a total of **20k euros** about 2 years after the appointment of the priest – assuming that our spare land has not been sold in the meantime. In that event we will have to ask for those pledges to be fulfilled, but all loans will be repaid as early as possible afterwards. (NB Gifts will attract a substantial tax rebate, but this does not apply to loans)

So, we are now asking all church members to consider how best they can assist, and to make a written commitment that we can rely on. But in doing so, please do be realistic, and don't promise something that you might not be able to provide later. Please remember that gifts are allowable against tax, but loans are not.

At present, we believe that the funds would NOT be required in much less than 2 years, if at all.

After consideration and prayer, please complete the following form and hand to a churchwarden.

All information will be treated confidentially.

CHRISTCHURCH GRATOT AND VIREY

PLEDGES OF LOANS OR GIFTS

Name

Address

Phone and email details

I / We would like to assist and offer to raise the following funds by :

A pledge of

An interest free loan of available for..... years

A regular payment of per month / quarter paid for years.

Other means

I /We pay our taxes (impots) in France YES / NO

Signed..... Date.....