

Dear Parishioner,

This letter has been written on behalf of St Joseph's Renovation Committee made up of the following members:

Fr Crowley, Martin Mullan, Gerard O'Kane, Gerry Mullan, Shane O'Kane, George Mimmagh, Michael McKeown, Mary Kate McLaughlin, Vincent Quigg and Katherine Anderson.

Further to the circulation of 390 letters regarding the renovation of our Church which were delivered in March 2021, 118 were returned.

We want to acknowledge from the outset, those parishioners who do contribute to the Renovation Fund and those who have recently responded to our letter. This is greatly appreciated by the Parish. Likewise, we cannot forget the work carried out by the previous committee.

The estimated cost of the renovation project at this point has risen from £615,000 to £700,000 due to Covid and Brexit but if the project is not started in the near future, this cost will increase significantly due to increasing material and labour costs. To that end, the sooner we can start, the better.

The Renovation account balance as of 13th June 2021 is £212,464.

A low interest loan of £250,000 has now been secured from a neighbouring parish which has to be repaid at £2,500 per month over a 10-year period.

As you can see from these figures, there is a significant shortfall, and we are therefore at crisis point. We urgently need your financial help.

In a bid to source any additional funding opportunities, a 'Friends of St Joseph's Committee' has been established to look at grant funding options. £6,000 has been secured to date but we are still a long way off. This Committee is now focusing on the Heritage Lottery Fund which is an onerous process and there are no guarantees of funding.

The Renovation Committee have also made enquiries with the Diocesan Office about the feasibility of the sale of Parish lands. We await an update from the Diocesan Office on this request.

Every one of us in this Parish needs the services of the Church at some stage in our lives whether it be for a Baptism, a Wedding, or a Funeral, not to mention the support it provides to our School and our young people for delivery of the sacraments. The Church is an important part of our history, our community, and our future.

If we want to retain these facilities handed down to us by our Forefathers, and moreover be able to hand them down to our own children and grandchildren, then we need everyone to come together to support this project. This is our last chance.

Are we the generation that is going to allow the Church building to deteriorate or can we be the generation that will make a difference?

Please, give what you can, as soon as you can, to St Joseph's Renovation Fund. No amount is too small, and absolutely every penny counts. Furthermore, if you and your family have any suggestions or ideas for generating funds, please contact a committee member at the earliest opportunity.

St Joseph's Renovation Committee
19th June 2021