

## **Diocese of Argyll and the Isles**

### **Bishop's Letter Regarding the Diocesan Financial Deficit**

**To be read at all Masses 17/18 November 2018**

Dear brothers and sisters,

Part of my role as your bishop is to ensure that our diocese of Argyll and the Isles is well governed. I intend to be diligent in this duty. As you know, financial issues form an important element of governance.

I want to thank you for your generosity in financially supporting the Church through the Sunday Offertory Collection and other means. I gratefully acknowledge that you continue a strong tradition of faith, often in difficult circumstances, which even predates the diocese's birth in 1878. However, for a number of reasons the diocese is running at a financial deficit and is in a perilous situation. With its small scattered communities, long distances by land and sea and many buildings which experience the full force of inclement weather means that we face problems larger dioceses don't have.

Since my arrival in the diocese I have given our difficult financial situation a high priority. We now have a professional part-time treasurer to organise strategies which aim to ensure long term stability. There have been discussions with clergy and the lay faithful through Parish Finance Committees. I fully appreciate that many of our parishes are small. In my deliberations I have been determined

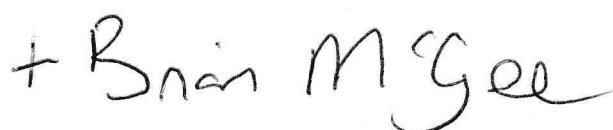
that any solution protects each parish. Therefore, today I ask that each parishioner, if they are able, donates an extra £1 per week to the Offertory Collection. If this appeal is successfully supported then both your parish income will increase while simultaneously the diocesan deficit will be eradicated.

On my part I resolve to greater financial transparency within the diocese. Our diocese is already audited by independent accountants and we comply with the Office of the Scottish Charity Regulator. However, it is your money and you have the right to know how it is spent. Accordingly, the diocese will publish a quarterly update on our website.

When you leave the Church today you will receive an Information Leaflet. Please take it home with you and read it later. It describes some of the commitments that the diocese is financially responsible for but also more fully explains how an extra £1 per week would both eradicate the deficit and increase your parish income.

Brothers and sisters, I finish by thanking you once more for your fidelity to Christ's Church. One element of this includes financial support but it is also much more than just that. Your witness to Christ through prayer and in your daily living provides much needed light and hope in your community and beyond.

Please pray for me as I do for you every day.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "+ Brian McGee". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

+Brian McGee

Bishop of Argyll and the Isles