

Dear Parishioner

This newsletter takes the form of an annual report, which will inform you of the events of the past year, the amount of money raised and how this money has been spent.

Excluding Gift Aid, your total giving last year amounted to £9482.95 an increase on the previous year of £2310. Thanks to this and money carried over from 2002, we were able to send £9130 to Malawi.

Our twinning has only been in existence for two and a half years and in this time we have sent £14,630 to our friends in Malawi. This is a tremendous achievement, when we consider the calls on our giving throughout the year.

FINANCES

This was our income:

Brought forward from 2002	2598.50
Giving this year	5985.98
Six events held	3496.97
Gift Aid received to date	594.84
Total	<u>12676.29</u>

From this we gave:

Sponsorships (two years)	5280
Fr Nazario	1000
Fr Emmanuel	1200
Mgr Boniface	300
Others	1350
Total	<u>9130</u>

The amounts given under the heading of 'others,' were donations given by parishioners to certain priests for specific purposes. These are not identified but are still very much a part of our twinning project.

HOW DID WE USE YOUR GIVING?

Our child sponsorship programme is going very well, with thirty children attending secondary school this year. Three further parishioners wish to sponsor and we hope to get more children into the scheme shortly. We may have a few extra children if anyone wishes to take a sponsorship; just contact Peter Wells on **01732 358324**

The money given by our sponsors was sent in mid December in time for the new academic year, which starts in early January. The children may not attend unless their fees are paid in advance, so it was important to send them in good time. Because the money was a little late being sent last year, the first year of the scheme, this year's accounts show two sets of payments being made.

We also sent £450 to Fr Emmanuel, who is rector of St Anthony's Major seminary, to purchase three bicycles for use of the students when they are visiting the sick and the elderly in the local villages. They do this as part of their pastoral training, often taking the Blessed Sacrament. Having the bicycles means, of course, that they can visit more homes on the day.

In our September newsletter we told of the poorer students, often orphans, who have little or no money to buy books, clothing, toiletries and other basic needs. Fr Emmanuel soon identifies these and the seminary helps where it can. We sent £750 to give him a small fund from which he could help them. He has about 120 students this year and many of these will benefit.

Mgr Boniface told us of a village called *Chiringa* whose church has two large, active choirs. We sent them £300 to buy a keyboard. This may not sound like an essential need but if it encourages active worship, especially amongst the youngsters, then it has to be worth it. We already have connections with this community, because several of their children are in our sponsorship scheme.

In response to a request from Fr Nazario, we sent £1,000 to a very poor (even by their standards) parish within his diocese called *Nkhate*. They have an old solar electricity system, which needs repair. They also wish to erect a small building to house a water pump. All they had were five bags of cement and stones and sand gathered from the locality. A neighbouring parish, *Misomali*, needed help to buy a refrigerator and place wire gauze around the windows of the presbytery to keep out the mosquitoes.

Fr Nazario has since written to say that the work at *Nkhate* has started and that the parish priest will be writing to us. We will keep you informed on that one.

WHAT ABOUT THE FUTURE?

We have over £3,500 in the account and are urging the priests to tell us of their local needs. There have been three developments:

Mgr Boniface has asked for help in setting up a pre-school playgroup in one of his local parishes. We are awaiting his answers to a number of questions about this and we will then fund the setting up and running of the group. This will be an annual commitment of about £1,000 but we will be helping mothers and their young children at a vulnerable time in their lives.

Mchinji is a parish close to Fr Emmanuel's seminary. When Fr Denis returned he spoke to the parish priest about the possibility of our sponsoring some of his children through secondary school. There may also be a chance to help with any ongoing projects. By including *Mchinji*, we are in touch with all the parishes local to the priests who have been to our parish.

Nsanje Primary School has now re-started and we hope to be in touch soon. They do not have any classroom, sports or other recreational equipment and Fr Nazario has obtained costs for us, to consider how we can help. Our Catenians have this year nominated *Malawi-Twin* as their named charity. Their chairman, Bill Dawson, wishes to help the school to purchase sports equipment and we hope to give you further news about this in the near future.

Communications with Malawi are very slow because they do not have our infrastructure, so their pace of life is much more slow. Fr Nazario is the only one with whom we have electronic contact and we are often in touch with him. However, he is very busy in his new position as secretary to his bishop and we are conscious of this.

Please continue to pray for the people of Malawi and thank you for your support over this past year.

Peter Wells
Co-ordinator, Malawi-Twin