

THE GENEROSITY CYCLE AND CROSS-DIOCESAN COMPARISONS

0. Background:

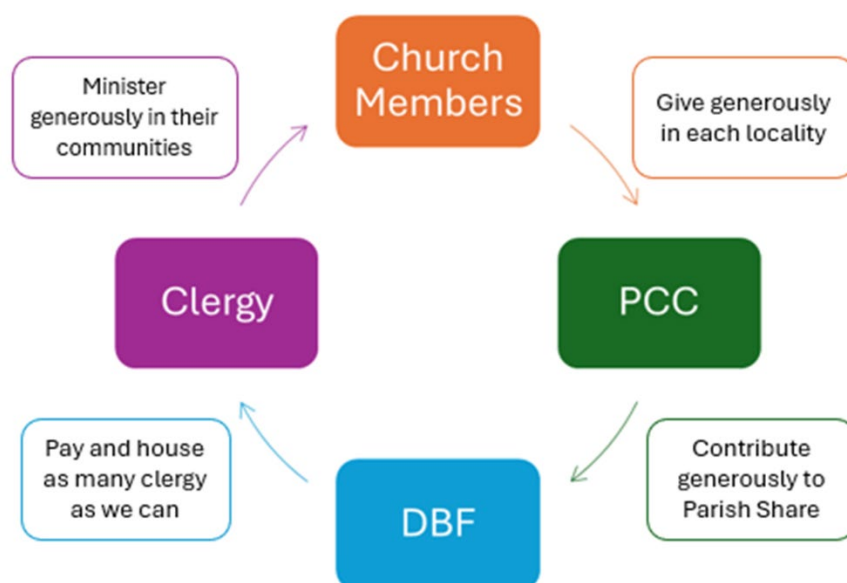
At our Autumn Deanery meetings, we have shared the Cycle of Generous Giving, together with some cross-Diocesan comparisons. It was requested that we share this with Diocesan Synod, as these form a different perspective on how we are doing in relation to others.

1. The Cycle of Generous Giving

There is a circular flow of giving around the Diocese:

- Our congregation members give generously to their local parish church ... which enables...
- Each PCC makes a generous financial contribution to the diocese in the form of Parish Share ... which enables...
- The diocese pays and houses as many clergy as possible, as well as providing services to parishes such as buildings advice and safeguarding checks ... which enables ...
- The clergy generously minister in their parishes, nurturing and growing their congregations, leading to generous giving....

This is summarised in the diagram below...



2. Diocesan Comparisons

There are 41 dioceses in the Church of England (excluding the Diocese in Europe). Looking at the most recent published statistics, from 2023, Chichester is:

- the 9th largest in terms of population (1,704,000 people)
- 13th largest in terms of the number of parishes (347) and 12th largest in terms of the number of churches (469)
- has the third largest electoral roll (38,100)
- has the 4th largest worshipping community (42,400).

If we express comparisons in terms of the cycle of generous giving, and look at an average of three South Eastern neighbours (ones use a broadly similar method of Parish Share, and who publish figures for “Parish Ministry Cost”) we get the following data:

	Chichester	Average of Guildford/London/Southwark ^a
Average Weekly Giving by Church Members	£ 18.04	£ 25.19
Average Parish Share contributed per Parish	£ 39,350	£ 62,233
PMC for S Post	£ 83,346	£ 94,760
Population per Full Time Equivalent Minister	6,966	7,524

The table above gives figures for the other three South Eastern dioceses who

This shows that Chichester:

- **deploys 8% more clergy per head of population than the comparator dioceses,** (and when compared with the Church of England as a whole, 20% more clergy)
- **manages to do this at a 7.8% lower parish ministry cost.** (Calculations are broadly similar, but there are some small differences e.g. London include the cost of Council Tax in their calculation.)
- **parishes contribute on average 37% less parish share than the other SE dioceses.** This is in part explained by parishes having smaller worshipping communities, but church members in Chichester contribute on average 9% less parish share each than in the other three dioceses.
- **church members give on average 29% less per week.** This is largely explained by differences in incomes as the proportion given is broadly similar. The average weekly

giving by church members in Chichester also sits behind much more deprived dioceses such as Sheffield (£19.93) and Birmingham (£18.72) – where church members give more cash each week from incomes which are more than 25% lower.

3. Implications

These patterns are not sustainable without greater generosity – we want to sustain more clergy than the average diocese, and we're committed to keeping Parish Ministry Costs lower than comparator dioceses, yet these statistics place an ongoing pressure on the sustainability of our situation.

Together we need to grow generosity. How can we grow greater generosity together?

John Preston & Catherine Dawkins