



CATHOLIC PARISH OF  
**ST. ELIZABETH OF PORTUGAL**  
*Newsletter*

Fifth Sunday  
of Lent

Sunday 18th  
March 2018

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Mass Book: Page 169

## Gallup Survey Results

Thank you to everyone who took part in the recent Gallup ME25 survey of parish engagement. Over the next few weeks we will be digesting the results and using them to plan for the future here at St Elizabeth's. Last week I shared them with a friend who has a lot of experience with the survey. He was astounded by the improvement that has taken place here since we last did it two years ago. His amazement really brought home to me how much we have achieved as a parish in such a short space of time.

Gallup defines engaged parishioners as members who *“are loyal and have a strong psychological connection to their parish. They are more spiritually committed, more likely to invite*

*friends, family members, and co-workers to parish events, and give more both financially and in commitment of time”.*

Parishioners who are not engaged *“may attend regularly, but they are not psychologically connected to their parish. Their connection to the parish is more social than spiritual. They give moderately but not sacrificially, and they may do a minimum amount of volunteering in the community. They are less likely to invite others and more likely to leave”.*

Parishioners who are actively disengaged are often people who are *“physically present but psychologically absent. They are unhappy with their parish and insist on sharing that unhappiness with just about everyone”.* This was

our largest group in 2016.

Our latest percentages for each of the three categories are as follows (with the 2016 figure in brackets):

- Engaged: 30% (10%);
- Not Engaged 47% (42%);
- Actively Disengaged 23% (48%).

More interesting than the headline figures are the individual scores used to calculate the totals. Here the figures suggest a statistically significant increase in all indicators of social engagement in the parish but a much more moderate increase in the indicators of spiritual commitment.

It will take us a while to digest all the data and to plan from them: but the good news is that we can be really proud of our achievements!

## **Why is Alpha such a big deal in our parish?**

### ***Alpha begins again on Tuesday 17th April***

1. Currently 90% of people baptised as Catholics lapse from the faith. No other organisation would haemorrhage members at such a rate without asking whether it had to try something new.
2. The vast majority of people approaching the parish for sacraments (baptism, marriage, Communion, confirmation) do not practise the faith. Many of them cannot articulate the basic tenets of the Christian faith. What are we doing to help them?
3. It is perfectly possible to “know the faith” and not realised that we are called to a relationship with God which is strengthened by prayer and Sacramental grace.
4. Alpha works. Have a look at some of the testimonies below.

*“I have been a Catholic all my life but over the last 10 to 15 years drifted away from the faith; personal challenges and becoming increasingly cynical, particularly as a solicitor seeing life through the prism of business and money, I was beginning to forget the true me and what I and my faith really stood for. I chose Alpha because I wanted to re-visit all the questions I kept asking myself - was God really there for me?; How could I speak to Him and was He listening? More importantly does He speak to me? I wanted to challenge and be challenged. I wanted to meet other cynics who are also on a journey.*

*In the setting of Alpha at St Elizabeth’s and meeting some truly lovely and wonderful people who were asking the same questions and with the same level of cynicism I have gone a long way to rediscovering me and my faith. Still a ways to go but I am on my way...”. [Nick]*

*“As a new parishioner, I was invited to attend an Alpha course. I thought “What a warm welcome to the parish!” It has been so much more. The course has given me a closer, more personal, relationship with our Faith. I invite you, whether you're new to the parish or not, younger or older, to attend a course. You've everything to gain!” [Linda]*

*“Being born in a Catholic country, and raised by a Catholic family made me take my own beliefs for granted. I never thought what being Catholic really means, because not being one was never an option. Alpha has proven to be a great and fulfilling experience where I got to understand not just my faith but also myself. It’s given me a brand new perspective and although I know there's still a lot to work on, Alpha was definitely a great first step in the right direction. An amazing initiative that has really helped me out for which I can only be grateful”. [Inés]*

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## *Parish Life & News*

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### **Reframe - Catholic Voices**

It's tough when you're asked about a controversial issue... Reframe is an inspiring and practical experience of applying the wisdom and genius of the heart of the Gospel to 'hot-button' and relevant topics. Engaging and well-trained speakers want to share the experience of Catholic Voices sharing the Church's story in the media and help ordinary Catholics to change controversy into an opportunity to share the Church's story in your conversations at work and at home. Reframe will be on Wednesday evenings starting on 25th April, in the Crypt. Watch this space for more details.

### **Parish Surgery**

There is no parish surgery this week as we have a meeting of the Finance Committee. The next one will be on Monday 26th March from 6.30pm until 8.00pm. Parish Surgery is the time to see me about weddings and baptisms without needing an appointment.

### **Flowers for Easter**

Next Sunday there will be a second collection today to decorate the Church for Easter.

### **Stations of the Cross**

During Lent we have Stations of the Cross in the Church on Fridays at 7.00pm.

### **Easter Offering**

The collection at Christmas and on Easter Sunday are your gift to the clergy of your parish. In this diocese the priests do not receive a wage and rely on your generosity. The parish can

claim Gift Aid on any donations you make and Easter Offering envelopes are available for this purpose.

### **Inviting People to Alpha**

We are asking all our parishioners to think of and pray for four friends who could be invited to our next Alpha. Fr Stephen is also praying for them intentionally at Mass every day. This week, for example, who do you know who is a lapsed Catholic?

### **New Parishioners Party**

Our next party to welcome new parishioners will be on Monday 11th June. We invite our new parishioners to complete a 'welcome card' from the back of the Church.

### **Moving the Organ**

During Holy Week our organ will be serviced and I have asked for a quotation to move it from the Sacred Heart Chapel to the choir loft. Moving the organ will require permission from the diocese and the Historic Churches Committee. Last year we spent a lot of money carrying out work mandated by statutory Health and Safety requirements. We also spent nearly £9,000 consolidating the wall paintings. Rather than deplete our capital further, we will need to raise the funds to move the organ and will start a fund-raising campaign after Easter.

### **Funeral Mass**

Please be aware that on Wednesday this week we will have the Requiem Mass for Barbara Childs at midday. There won't be a 9.00am Mass here that day.

## Thank You

Thank you for your offering last week which came to:

<b>Gift Aid</b>	£228.50
<b>Not Gift Aid</b>	£954.58
<b>Total</b>	£1,183.08

To avoid seasonal fluctuations and to help us budget it greatly helps our parish finances if you take part in our **Planned Giving** scheme. For more information please email:

[giftaid@stelizabethschurch.org.uk](mailto:giftaid@stelizabethschurch.org.uk)

### Mass Attendance Last Week:

Sat. 5.30pm	86
Sun. 9.30am	165
Sun. 11.00am	119
Sun. 5.30pm	112
<b>Total:</b>	<b>482</b>

## Social Media



[stelizabethschurch.org.uk](http://stelizabethschurch.org.uk)



StLizRichmond/



@StLizRichmond

## Mass Intentions this Week

### This Week

#### Saturday

5.30pm

#### Fifth Sunday of Lent

Ben Horgan

#### Sunday

9.30am

Donor's Intention

11.00am

Anne Bugey RIP

5.30pm

*Pro Populo*

#### Monday

9.00am

#### ST JOSEPH

Goodhart (Int.)

#### Tuesday

9.00am

#### *Feria (Passiontide)*

Adam Diener

#### Wednesday

Noon

#### Funeral Mass of

Barbara Childs RIP

#### Thursday

7.00pm

#### *Feria (Passiontide)*

Helen mary O'Loan

#### Friday

10.00am

#### *Feria (Passiontide)*

Rod & Molly O'Loan

7.00pm

STATIONS OF THE CROSS

#### Saturday

5.30pm

#### *Feria (Passiontide)*

Laura Fimbel & Eleanor Nugent RIP

#### Sunday

#### PALM SUNDAY OF THE PASSION OF THE

#### LORD

9.30am

Helen Skelly RIP

11.00am

Elma & Frank O'Shea RIP

5.30pm

*Pro Populo*

### Please Pray For:

Christopher Browne, Philomena Dunne, Gaye Delanghe, Raymond and Marie Toal, Ben Horgan, Ella Dale, Stella Richards, Anne Wilkinson, Peter

### Parish Contact Details:

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