

Reflections

We need bigger hearts

IT is disheartening to learn that Okehampton hospital will lose all the 16 in-patient beds.

The main explanation that CCG puts forward is to manage the deficit in excess of £400-million by 2020 which draws our sympathetic understanding with reluctant acceptance of the decision.

The across-the-board cuts are deployed nationwide. It might be possible to achieve the intended target of saving £1-billion per year and thus bringing down the spending to £4.5-billion in the next five years. Doing this is presumed to result in us having a better economy.

The ones that will take direct hit from this is the social security services including NHS, housing benefits, child benefits and disability benefits.

Reflecting up on this situation, it is clear that there is a fight between hearts and minds. People opposing the cuts worry about the virtue-value loss while those supporting the cuts worry about the material-money loss.

People with bigger hearts and brighter minds are like two sides of a same coin. There has to be unity between them in order to make a valuable contribution to the family and the



By Father Darline Marianathan, St Boniface, Okehampton and Holy Family Church, Chagford.

community in which they belong. It is natural to have tensions between them since both are equally and potentially essential for happy and successful living. One attempting to be more important than the other or the unwillingness to engage in constructive compromise results in failure.

Looking at the CCG's extensive explanation for the bed losses, as a student of research methodology (qualitative and quantitative) I know how brighter minds managed to win their arguments in this particular case. But their win can't bring the intended results; overall happiness and peace without the people with bigger hearts.

We need both; the brighter minds for the word and the bigger hearts for the deed, working together in truth towards a healthy and happy living. 'Little children, let us not love in word or talk but in deed and in truth' (1John 3:18).