

2024 - 2025
DIOCESE OF LA CROSSE
DIOCESAN ANNUAL APPEAL
PARISH MANUAL



STEWARDSHIP & DEVELOPMENT OFFICE

Jeff Reiter, Director of Stewardship & Development

Sarah Komperud, Administrative Assistant

HEAVENLY FATHER,

WE COME BEFORE YOU WITH HUMBLE HEARTS, SEEKING THE SUCCESS OF OUR DIOCESAN ANNUAL APPEAL. WE ARE CALLED THROUGH OUR BAPTISM AND FORTIFIED BY THE EUCHARIST. UNITE US AS ONE IN PURPOSE AND FAITH THAT WE MAY CARRY OUT YOUR SON'S MISSION WITH APOSTOLIC ZEAL.

GOD, GRANT US WISDOM AND STRENGTH TO WORK HARMONIOUSLY, REFLECTING THE UNITY AND LOVE OF THE HOLY TRINITY. WITH YOUR SANCTIFYING GRACE, HELP US OVERCOME CHALLENGES AND BLESS OUR UNDERTAKINGS, MAKING THEM FRUITFUL.

JESUS, ACKNOWLEDGING THAT, AS YOUR WORD TEACHES, WE ARE YOUR CO-WORKERS, MAY WE GLORIFY YOUR HOLY NAME, BRINGING FORTH THE FRUITS OF YOUR KINGDOM, LIFTING UP EACH OTHER, ESPECIALLY THOSE IN MOST NEED.

HOLY SPIRIT OF GOD, GUIDE OUR ACTIONS AND DECISIONS SO THAT THEY MAY BE GRACE-FILLED, FOSTERING COMMUNITY AND SERVICE. INSPIRE US WITH THE TEACHINGS OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST AND THE EXAMPLES OF ALL THE HOLY SAINTS SO OUR CHARITABLE WORKS SHINE WITH THE RADIANCE OF THE LIGHT OF GOD.

WE ASK THIS WITH CONFIDENCE THROUGH CHRIST OUR LORD.

AMEN

BISHOP GERARD BATTERSBY

THE ROMAN CATHOLIC DIOCESE OF LA CROSSE

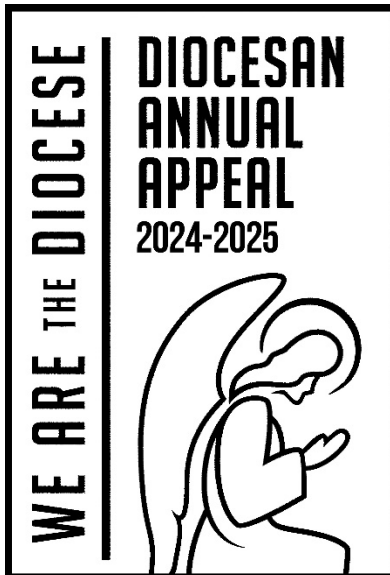


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A Letter From the Director

Dear Parish Appeal Leader,

May the Lord give you peace!

The Diocesan Annual Appeal-supported ministries invite all, regardless of their affiliations, to gather at the foot of the Cross and help further Christ's mission to baptize disciples of all nations. Together, as God's fellow workers, we are called to fulfill this mission by spreading the joy of the Gospel and offering healing and redemption through God's love.

This year's theme, inspired by *1 Corinthians 3:9*, reminds us of our role as co-workers in God's vineyard, cultivating and building His Church. We do this by:

- **Trusting in God's Providence:** As Pope Benedict XVI said, despite our "weaknesses, limitations, and difficulties, we must become like a window open to the light of the living God."
- **Participating in God's Mission:** every believer has a role in spreading the Gospel and building up the Church.
- **Collaborating with Divine Grace:** Human cooperation is essential because God initiates and sustains the work. God's grace and our free will are complimentary.
- **Uniting as a Community:** We are to support and uplift each other in our spiritual journeys and service to the Church.
- **Servicing via our Vocation:** Regardless of our vocation, we must view our daily work and duties as part of our collaboration with God.
- **Stewarding our Gifts:** The faithful carry out Jesus's mission by using their gifts to bring the good news of the Gospel to the world.

We must ensure a successful Annual Appeal for our diocese to carry out its role in Jesus's mission.

By supporting the Diocese of La Crosse's efforts and ministries through the Diocesan Annual Appeal, we can continue to build unity in faith and community.

As a leader in this Appeal, we urge you to use your God-given time, talents, and treasure to inspire others to support this cause prayerfully and financially. Your leadership can encourage others to share their gifts with their Parish, the Diocese, the global Church, and beyond.

This manual is designed to guide your Parish through the Diocesan Annual Appeal process. We encourage you to read it carefully, as it contains valuable insights and strategies.

If you have any questions about the Appeal process or how the Office of Stewardship & Development can support your Parish, please do not hesitate to contact us. We are here to assist and help you in every way possible.

Thank you for your dedication and commitment to the Church

+Peace and All Good,



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MISSION STATEMENT OF THE DIOCESAN ANNUAL APPEAL

The Diocesan Annual Appeal financially supports the Church's mission by seeking financial and philanthropic gifts and providing all of God's people an opportunity to give sacrificially.

APPEAL LOGO EXPLAINER

"For we are co-workers in God's service; you are God's field, God's building."

- ❖ **Central Imagery:**
 - **Cross:** The cross at the top signifies the supremacy of Christ
 - **Hands:** Two hands come together, symbolizing our unity and shared purpose as co-workers in God's service. The hands are pointed up and open to receive God's grace, a reminder of our dependence on His divine help.
 - **Field:** Beneath the hands is a depiction of a field, a symbol of our diocese's rural character. This field is 'God's field,' a reminder of our unique identity and connection to the land that sustains us.
 - **Water:** Behind the hands along the green fields signify the waters of the rivers and lakes in our area, which, like the baptismal waters, refresh and give life.

- ❖ **Color Scheme:** The colors chosen for the logo are not just visually appealing but also carry deep spiritual and religious significance. Each color reflects our faith and serves as a constant reminder of God's presence in our lives.
 - **Gold:** Gold represents God's majesty and glory and the richness of His divine presence. It signifies the Church's joy and triumph, conveying the richness of faith and the beauty of worship.
 - **Green:** Green symbolizes the fields of our farms and the forests of our diocese. It also represents the life of the Holy Spirit, who brings growth and vitality. More importantly, it is the color associated with hope and renewal, which the ministries supported by the Diocesan Annual Appeal provide. This green in our logo is a constant reminder of the optimism and rejuvenation that our faith brings.
 - **Blue:** Blue symbolizes the waters of our Diocese; in the Church, it represents stability and spirituality. Blue is also associated with Mother Mary as our intercessor and model of faith. We have included it in our logo to honor her role in our spiritual journey, a journey that she walks with us, guiding and comforting us in times of need.

WHY DO WE HAVE THE DIOCESAN ANNUAL APPEAL?

The Diocesan Annual Appeal was initiated in 1997 to provide financial aid to the Diocese of La Crosse and to support critical Diocesan programs, such as clergy healthcare, seminarian education, Catholic service agencies, and needy persons, as well as the parishes, the schools, and the universal Church. By strengthening the Church's financial base, the Diocesan Annual Appeal has significantly advanced the work of the Church, locally and beyond. Being a Catholic means taking responsibility for the needs of one's Parish and the wider Church by recognizing that our gifts come from God and, with grateful hearts, practicing the stewardship of our time, talents, and treasures to do our share to fulfill the mission of Jesus Christ.

Dioceses generate the majority of their systematic funding in three ways. First is the quota tax on qualified parish income, which equals roughly 7% of the revenue for our Diocese. Second, they receive income from endowments and other investments. Finally, like most dioceses, the Diocesan Annual Appeal generates direct contributions to support ministries and services. Direct donations to the Diocesan Annual Appeal are crucial, the lifeblood of our Church's ministerial operations. Without such appeals, the dioceses' training, ministries, education, and charitable good works would have to be funded almost totally through the Quota that all parishes pay. Your contributions are significant in maintaining the operations of our Church, without which a higher quota on parish income would be inevitable.

The Diocesan Annual Appeal serves several essential purposes within the Catholic Church, primarily focusing on the mission of evangelization, support for the faithful, and the promotion of charitable works.

- **Support for Missionary Work:** The appeal encourages contributions to support missions' spiritual and material needs. It emphasizes the importance of increasing voluntary donations to help alleviate these needs, particularly in areas where priests and resources are scarce. The appeal aligns with the Church's commitment to fostering missionary vocations and supporting new dioceses, as highlighted by Pope John XXIII in 1959.
- **Evangelization Efforts:** The appeal is a means to mobilize resources for ongoing evangelization efforts. Pope John Paul II noted the Church's need to focus on evangelization as a dynamic mission, which includes addressing the community's needs and fostering a deeper understanding of faith among the faithful. The appeal helps fund programs to bring the Gospel into homes, workplaces, and neighborhoods.
- **Charitable Works and Community Support:** The appeal also plays a crucial role in supporting charitable activities within the diocese. It enables the Church to respond to the needs of the poor, the sick, and those in distress, reflecting the Church's mission of service and solidarity. Pope John Paul II emphasized that the Church's service to humanity must be linked with its missionary activities, ensuring the dignity of every person.
- **Building Community and Solidarity:** The appeal fosters a sense of community among the faithful, encouraging them to work together in service to one another. It aims to create a family of families within the Church, where acceptance of the Lord and brotherhood are expressed through collective efforts in evangelization and charity. This communal aspect is vital for the Church's mission, as it helps to strengthen the bonds among parishioners and encourages active participation in the life of the Church.

In summary, the Diocesan Annual Appeal is essential for supporting missionary work, promoting evangelization, facilitating charitable activities, and building a solid faith community. It reflects the Church's commitment to serving the spiritual and material needs of its members and the wider community.

WHY IS IT CRUCIAL FOR PEOPLE TO GIVE TO THE DIOCESAN ANNUAL APPEAL?

Giving to the Diocesan Annual Appeal enables parishioners to participate in sacrificial giving, which, in turn, helps provide funding for Catholic education, ministries, and services to the people, parishes, and schools throughout our Diocese. Your contributions make a tangible difference in our community.

The Diocesan Annual Appeal is a teachable moment. It allows parish leaders to talk about how everything we have is a gift from God and was given to us to share. It is also a reminder of our connectedness as a Church. That connectedness is present in the Creed, and we reaffirm that we are members of the "One, Holy, Catholic, and Apostolic Church." However, often people don't reflect on the meaning of these words.

The Diocesan Annual Appeal is a powerful reminder that every Catholic is not just a member of a local Church but also a part of the Universal Church. We all share the responsibility for the well-being of the Church throughout our Diocese and the world. As a united community of believers, the Appeal invites members of all parish communities throughout the Diocese of La Crosse to contribute, reinforcing our shared duty of belonging to the Church.

Our collective giving is an extension of Christ's hands, reaching out to those in need in our Diocese and worldwide. Individual and Parish efforts are critical to the overall success of the Diocese. By reaching your parish target, you ensure your Parish's success and that the Diocese can provide much-needed services to the 19 counties in Western Wisconsin.

Contributions to the Diocesan Annual Appeal are crucial for several reasons that align with the mission and operational needs of the Church.

- **Support for Missionary Activities:** The appeal is vital for funding missionary work and is essential for addressing spiritual and material needs in various dioceses. Pope John XXIII emphasized the importance of increasing contributions to support missions, particularly in areas facing a shortage of priests and resources. This financial support helps ensure that the Church can continue its mission of evangelization and outreach.
- **Charitable Works:** The appeal facilitates the Church's charitable initiatives, which are fundamental to its mission. Pope Pius XII noted the significant role of diocesan charity offices in providing aid to the poor and needy, reflecting the Church's commitment to Christian mercy. Contributions help sustain these efforts, allowing the Church to respond effectively to the community's needs.
- **Building Community and Solidarity:** The Diocesan Annual Appeal fosters a sense of unity among the faithful. It encourages collaboration and shared responsibility in the mission of the Church, as highlighted by Pope John Paul II, who called for a renewed commitment to evangelization and community building. This collective effort strengthens the bonds within the Church and enhances its ability to serve effectively.
- **Transparency and Accountability:** The appeal also emphasizes the importance of transparency in financial matters. Pope John Paul II pointed out that the financial administration of the Diocese should be handled competently and honestly, ensuring that contributions are used for their intended purposes. This accountability builds trust among the faithful, encouraging them to contribute knowing their donations will be managed responsibly.
- **Sustaining Local Parishes:** The appeal is essential for supporting local parishes, which are the foundational units of the Church's mission. The financial resources gathered through the appeal help support parishes through training and other various ministries, ensuring they can continue serving their communities effectively.

In summary, giving to the Diocesan Annual Appeal is crucial as it supports missionary activities, charitable works, community building, financial transparency, and the sustainability of local parishes. These elements are integral to the Church's mission and its ability to serve the faithful and the broader community.

WHAT ROLE DOES STEWARDSHIP PLAY IN GIVING TO THE ANNUAL APPEAL?

Stewardship plays a fundamental role in giving, particularly within the Catholic Church. It encompasses the responsible management of resources entrusted to individuals by God, emphasizing the moral obligation to use these resources for the common good and the benefit of others.

- **Understanding Stewardship:** Stewardship is rooted in the belief that all creation is a gift from God, and humans are caretakers of these gifts. The Catechism of the Catholic Church states that God entrusted the earth and its resources to humanity for care and enjoyment, highlighting the communal aspect of these resources. This understanding fosters a sense of responsibility among individuals to manage their gifts wisely and generously.
- **Moral Responsibility:** Stewardship is a moral obligation to use one's resources not just for personal gain but for the benefit of the wider community. Pope Benedict XVI emphasized that individuals must administer the resources entrusted to them to satisfy the needs of all members of the human family, avoiding selfish accumulation and promoting solidarity. This perspective encourages individuals to view their contributions as part of a larger mission to support the Church and its charitable works.
- **Cultivating Generosity:** Stewardship encourages a spirit of generosity, where individuals recognize their role as stewards of God's gifts. Pope Francis noted that property ownership should involve a stewardship that benefits the individual and the community. This understanding motivates individuals to give to the Diocesan Annual Appeal and other charitable initiatives, as they see their contributions as fulfilling their duty to share the blessings they have received.
- **Accountability and Judgment:** The notion of stewardship also includes the idea of accountability. Individuals will have to render an account of their stewardship, as highlighted by the International Theological Commission, which states that the means employed by stewards must align with divine principles. This accountability encourages thoughtful and moral decision-making regarding resource use and sharing.
- **Fostering Community and Solidarity:** Stewardship is essential for building community within the Church. By giving, individuals contribute to a collective effort that supports the Church's mission and helps those in need. This communal aspect of stewardship reinforces the idea that our gifts are to be shared and that everyone has a role in supporting the common good.

In summary, stewardship is integral to giving as it emphasizes responsible management, moral obligation, generosity, accountability, and community building. It encourages individuals to view their resources as gifts to be shared for the benefit of all, aligning their actions with the teachings of the Church.

KEY DATES

Mailing	Deadline For Parish Letters Inclusion	Expected Drop Date	Expected In-Home Date
Initial Mailing (Varies through October 25)	September 1, 2024	September 13, 2024	September 16, 2024
Follow-up (Giving Tuesday/ Year End)	November 10, 2024	November 29, 2024	December 3, 2024
Holy Week	March 21, 2025	April 9, 2025	April 11, 2025
End of the Appeal Year	May 12, 2025	May 28, 2025	May 30, 2025

THE THREE-PILLAR APPROACH

(BEST PRACTICES)

THE THREE-PILLAR APPROACH ENCOURAGES PROPORTIONATE, SACRIFICIAL GIVING.

1. Stewardship Sunday

Use this Sunday to kick off the campaign in your Parish. Establish the needs that are met with funds from the Annual Appeal. Set the context of shared work across the Diocese. Help parishioners understand how the money is used. Show the Annual Appeal video. Make them aware that they will receive the mailing the following week asking for their financial participation.

2. Commitment Sunday

Deliver the "ask" this Sunday via homily or lay testimony. Recap the needs and stories from the prior week. Make a direct request for prayers and participation in this year's appeal. Announce the parish target. Explain what your Parish will do with its rebate. Spend time explaining how to give, including the ability to give monthly installments.

3. Amen Sunday

Amen Sunday is effective in reminding mass-attending parishioners that their support is needed. This in-pew process will solicit parishioners who have not registered with the Parish and have not received the Appeal mailing.

THROUGHOUT THE YEAR

- Keep the Appeal before the people use multi-channel messaging with church bulletins, newsletters, announcements, social media, and websites:
 1. Highlight various ministries that use the Appeal funds.
 2. Track progress toward the target (target amount, pledge and cash total, % of parishioners pledging).
- Keep pledge cards and brochures readily available for parishioners to pick up anytime.
- Follow-up. Personal solicitation is strongly advised to encourage those who can support the Appeal but have not responded to the Appeal.
 1. **MAKE PHONE CALLS TO THOSE WHO GIVEN IN THE PAST BUT NOT THIS YEAR.**
 2. Make thank you calls to those who do participate.

See the Appendix for more detailed procedures and sample scripts for each weekend.

THE THREE PHASES OF AN APPEAL

Phase 1: Promote

Phase 2: Obtain

Phase 3: Thank

PHASE 1: PROMOTE THE APPEAL

STEWARDSHIP SUNDAY

The purpose of Stewardship Sunday is to announce the Diocesan Annual Appeal and your parish efforts. This Sunday is also the appropriate time to promote your parish target for the Appeal and what project you will fund with your rebate. Use this Sunday to kick off the campaign in your Parish. Establish how the funds from the Appeal meet needs in the Parish, Diocese, and the wider Church. Set the context of a shared community across the Diocese. Help parishioners understand how the Parish will use the money. Show the Annual Appeal video. Make them aware that they may have received or will be receiving the mailing the following week, asking for their financial participation.

Here are several best practices to help you promote the Appeal in your Parish. Advancing the Appeal positively, especially before and during Appeal Sundays, will show your parishioners that the Appeal is an integral part of parish life while strengthening our unity in the greater Church.

Studies indicate that a person must hear the same message seven times before beginning to process and trust it. Therefore, commitment, clarity, consistency, and repetitiveness in all communication are necessary.

BEST PRACTICES

- **Active and engaging Pastor's leadership that emphasizes support and participation in the Appeal. Set an example of generosity. As the chief advocate of the Appeal, the Pastor is essential to presenting it positively and enthusiastically.** Parishioners need to know that the Pastor has given to the Appeal and that making the parish target is a high priority.
 - Use homily messages – link the liturgical celebration to the mission of the Appeal and provide the spirituality of stewardship.
 - Send Letters from the Pastor
 - Public Gratitude – Thank the donors and volunteers publicly
 - Speak honestly and enthusiastically about how the Appeal's funds benefit the Parish and the wider Church. Mention:
 1. How did your Parish use grants or funding received through the Appeal?
 2. How did the Parish use the rebates received previously from earlier Appeals?
 3. How do the Curial offices' services help support the Parish?
 4. Explain vividly how the Appeal affects real lives.
- Show the Appeal Video at Mass, council and committee meetings, school assemblies, and formation classes; link it on your parish website. The video demonstrates how the gift to the Diocesan Annual Appeal works beyond your Parish.

- Can each person in the Church see the screen? Do you need to have more than one screen throughout the Church?
 - Does the audio work? Will everyone be able to hear the video? Is it possible to connect the audio through the Church's sound system? Make sure that you do a test run before Mass!
 - Will the lighting be a problem? Sometimes, natural light can make it difficult to see a T.V. screen. Is there another option you could use (i.e., a larger screen or the several televisions throughout the Church)?
 - Is there a parishioner who works for an electronics store or is knowledgeable about video/television equipment? Is there an electronics store that might donate the use of a large screen? Use your resources!
 - Consider showing the video on a T.V. in the gathering space of your Church as parishioners walk in and during social events after Mass.
- Witness talks invite speakers to testify firsthand about the appeal's impact. Keep the presentations pithy and brief.
 - The Pastor or designated layperson presents them.
 - Encourage parishioners to reflect on others' needs and their ability to pledge to the Diocesan Annual Appeal in preparation for Commitment Sunday.
 - Briefly explain the pledge process. Emphasize that a pledge can be payable over a period concluding June 30.
 - Promote and encourage Sustainable Gifts. A Sustainable gift is a monthly amount electronically withdrawn from a parishioner's account for 12 months.
 - Publish announcements – use your bulletin and school newsletters to promote the Appeal. Samples are on the DAA website. Please consider tweaking the message to fit your Parish's culture and messaging needs.
 - Use social media – Use apps to broadcast messages posted on your Flocknote, Facebook, and Instagram accounts. Check with the Curia's Communication department if you have any questions.
 - Utilize the marketing materials – Use the posters, banners, brochures, and case statements.
 - Encourage a 100% participation.
 1. Those previously given to the Appeal will most likely give again – don't be shy about asking.
 2. Even when no donors have large gifts, the target can be reached if everyone gives a little.
 3. When a parishioner respectfully responds to the Appeal, even a \$0 pledge, it signifies worthy parish membership.
 4. Consider asking parishioners to return the Appeal pledge cards as a way to conduct an annual parish census. Parishes that have used this approach have a very high level of giving.

In Phase 1, we focus on promotion to engage 100% participation of all parishioners. The goal is to encourage every Catholic household to make a stewardship gift to support the Diocesan works and ministries. This phase seeks not to have a minimum household gift between the Appeal's beginnings through its conclusion on June 30 but to encourage everyone to their best abilities.

OFFICE OF STEWARDSHIP AND DEVELOPMENT EFFORTS:

In the weeks leading up to the Appeal weekends, the S&D office works to raise awareness of the Appeal through several channels.

Catholic Life magazine will feature the ministries and good works possible because of the gifts to the Appeal and encourage people to make a gift.

Bishop Battersby sends a personal letter to all Catholic households, thanking active donors for their past support and encouraging them to continue their faithful stewardship, inviting inactive donors to commit. Pastors are encouraged to submit a letter of their own, as well. A custom-coded pledge card is included in the mailing.

Word-of-mouth marketing is the best and most cost-effective way to spread the good news of those helped by the Appeal. DAA marketing efforts are limited to keep costs low, so we rely on parish volunteers to tell their stories and personally invite participation.

Diocesan Communication Office will enhance the Appeal's Social Media by out-reaching, starting before the full launch to increase our presence, including the use of FlockNote, Facebook, MyParish App, etc.

Materials supplied by the Stewardship & Development Office:

- Posters
- Video
- Parish-specific blank (In-pew) pledge cards
- Initial mailing including pre-addressed pledge cards, brochures, a parish return envelope
- Special envelopes to send payments to The Office for Stewardship and Development
- This instruction manual. (Also, on the website www.diolc.org/appeal/)

PHASE 2: OBTAIN THE PLEDGE

The first pillar of stewardship is **Hospitality**- warmly inviting and lovingly welcoming. If we do not ask the people of God to pray with us and not help them feel welcomed upon arrival, this drastically reduces the chance of them returning or even staying to pray with us. If we are not praying together, how are we staying together? **Prayer** is the second pillar of Stewardship; we must develop a deeper relationship with Christ. We engage in a life of more in-depth inquiry and contemplation. Without a relationship with Christ, **Formation**, the third pillar of stewardship, does not happen. Without formation, an individual does not discern and accept the recognition of their need to serve. The pinnacle of stewardship is **Service** to others, the fourth pillar. Gratitude is the basis of Christian Stewardship. Christian Stewardship is our **Time** invested into our God-given **Talents**, which multiplies our **Treasures**: that is, our skills, experience, and wealth so that we may offer to and serve God, our Creator and the Provider of all our gifts, a grateful and humble return.

COMMITMENT SUNDAY

Commitment Sunday provides a compelling opportunity for parishioners to commit yearly to their Diocese and Universal Church by completing the Diocesan Annual Appeal pledge card. Pastors should speak about the Appeal during Mass. In addition, if there is an after-Mass event, make pledge cards available for parishioners to complete.

Deliver the "ask" this Sunday via homily and lay testimony. Recap the needs and stories from the prior week, direct requests for prayers, participate in this year's Appeal, and announce the parish target. Explain what your Parish will do with its rebate. Spend time teaching how to give, including giving through monthly installments.

BEST PRACTICES

1. During Homilies and Witness talks

- a. The Diocesan Annual Appeal is an opportunity to give proportion to the many blessings received from God. Therefore, we do not apologize for the appeal; this is their opportunity to practice stewardship and participate in the broader Church.
- b. Highlight the benefits of your Parish reaching your Appeal target and achieving a rebate.
- c. Be enthusiastic and speak with conviction.
- d. Encourage 100% participation by the Parish. (A \$1 or \$0 pledge is better than no commitment.)
- e. Give facts and concrete examples of how the Diocese supports your Parish. People are more likely to give if they see a connection between the Parish and the Diocese.
- f. Make brochures, blank pledge cards, and pencils available to all present. Encourage parishioners who have not already done so to support the Appeal by completing pledge cards and turning them into the collection. **Emphasize that if parishioners have already pledged, ask them to fill out a card ONLY IF they are making an additional pledge; they then need to indicate on the pledge card that it is an additional pledge.** (Pledge cards from parishioners who already pledged a gift and are not making a new pledge cause pledges to be recorded twice, resulting in double pledge reminders, which frustrates and upsets all involved, especially the parishioners.)

- g. Tell parishioners they do not have to make an initial payment; monthly reminder statements are sent if they choose not to opt-out.
- h. Promote the idea of pledging over a period since it enables people to give more than they could with a one-time gift. (All payments postmarked on or before June 30 will be included in the current year's Appeal.)
- i. Communicate the convenience of paying pledges (1) by credit card on the Diocesan website, (2) by credit card at the Diocesan Annual Appeal office, or (3) by Automatic Checking Payment. Encouraging sustainable giving year-round support through electronic means is the best investment method.
- j. Volunteers should be present to help distribute pledge cards, answer questions, and collect pledge cards and payments.

2. After-Mass

- a. Choose a convenient place for the event and provide light refreshments (if appropriate).
 - b. Brochures and pledge cards should be arranged on tables with pens and envelopes for parishioners to pledge.
 - c. Volunteers should be present to help distribute pledge cards, answer questions, and collect pledge cards and payments.
 - d. Explain the procedure briefly for filling out the pledge card.
- Have "in-pew" pledge cards available. Use the "in-pew" pledge card for bulletin announcements. Use cards provided by the Office for Stewardship and Development. These have special 2D scan coding that allows faster, more efficient, and more accurate processing. **Gifts received without the correct 2D code can expect up to two weeks or more processing delays.**
 - Setup a Stewardship Table: Set up a convenient and accessible station. Staff it with trained, friendly, and engaging people and have plenty of pens available. Remind people to fill out the card completely. Do not be afraid to include parish service opportunities. The three elements of Stewardship are Time, Talent, and Treasure.
 - Return pledges and gifts immediately—Honor your supporters. Do not create delays in processing their donations. Every gift is a sacrifice that could go elsewhere; acknowledge it as such. Immediately forwarding the gifts to the Office for Stewardship and Development ensures quick and timely acknowledgments of their donations. See Gift Processing for more information.
 - Encourage 100% participation.
 - Those who have previously given to the Appeal are most likely to give again – do not be shy about asking.
 - No gift is too small or too large.
 - When a parishioner respectfully responds to the Appeal, even a \$0 pledge, it signifies good parish membership.
 - Encourage parishioners to return the Appeal pledge cards as a way to conduct an annual parish census. Parishes that have used this approach have a very high level of giving.

- Pledged Giving encourages more significant gifts and allows parishioners to budget their support monthly, concluding June 30. Installment payments on pledges throughout the year encourage more sacrificial giving, whether by check, direct electronic payment from a parishioner's checking account, or credit card (VISA, MasterCard, American Express, or Discover). REMINDER: A pledge to the Diocesan Annual Appeal is not a legal debt, and a donor may cancel at any time by notifying, in writing, the Office for Stewardship and Development.

OFFICE FOR STEWARDSHIP AND DEVELOPMENT EFFORTS:

The Office for Stewardship and Development mails to all registered parishioners and other supporters from the previous year, a brochure, a letter from Bishop, and a personalized pledge card with last year's gift information and a suggest gift amount for this year.

The Office for Stewardship and Development will publish an ad of the Diocesan Appeals Annual Report in the *Catholic Life* magazine.

The Office for Stewardship and Development will be sending timely acknowledgments of all gifts and pledges. We will also begin sending out reminders for early supporters. We will continue to send reminders on a monthly basis until fulfilment of the pledge or through June 30 whichever comes first.

Stewardship is a way of life. Conceptually, Christian Stewardship progresses through four stages. These four stages are stages of maturation in our Christian life. These four stages, also known as the four ships of stewardship, are Leadership, Relationship, Discipleship, and Stewardship. **Leadership** is responding to the call by Christ to follow, leading us into closer communion with Him. This communion is the second ship, **Relationship**. A defining characteristic of relationships is the development of prayer life. As we discern through prayer and formation, we enter the third ship, **Discipleship**. Discipleship is the active and deliberative following of our Christ Jesus, not asking what Jesus would do but asking ourselves what Jesus does do. Almsgiving is the exemplification of Discipleship. A disciple gives of their Time, Talent, and Treasure generously and often; Discipleship is the necessary precursor of Christian **Stewardship**. Stewardship is our fourth ship; it is the disciple's full maturation. Christian Stewardship sacrificially gives of their Time, Talent, and Treasures. The hallmark of a Christian Steward is their Fasting. They are fasting from conveniences, treasures, and personal and worldly comforts to give back even more of their Time, Talent, and Treasures.

AMEN SUNDAY

Amen Sunday helps remind mass-attending parishioners of their needed support. This in-pew process will solicit parishioners who have not registered with the Parish and have not received the Appeal mailing. In addition, Amen Sunday is an excellent opportunity to ask a donor if they would like to become a registered parishioner. Many in the pew do not understand or even know the need to register.

The purpose of Amen Sunday is to generate gifts from parishioners who have not pledged to the Appeal. Therefore, encourage parishioners to write something, even zero, on the pledge card.

Following this in-pew solicitation process, if followed meticulously, will increase your chances of meeting or exceeding your goal. Unfortunately, only about 20% of parish households donate in the first mailing, even in the most mature appeals. Even though parish members will receive the mailing, many will not respond to it because they are not interested in giving, and many ignore direct mail appeals. Also, others are not registered at their Parish and do not receive the mailing.

Completing the in-pew process as directed below is essential. It will succeed in obtaining pledges from more families than just inviting them to take pledge cards, envelop them home, or stop at a table. In addition, the in-pew process assures that each parishioner who attends Mass understands the invitation they are considering and encourages pledging.

BEST PRACTICES

- Ask donors who gave last year – if a person gave the previous year but has not yet donated this year, they will most likely respond. So focus your energy here first to use your time best. A report to help identify these donors called the LYBUNTS (Last Year But Unfortunately Not This Year) report is available through a GivingTrend online reporting system.
- Next, focus on donors in recent years – if a person has contributed to the Appeal in the past few years but not last year or this one, reach out to re-establish a connection and ask for a gift this year. A SYBUNT (Some Year But Unfortunately Not This year) report is available on the GivingTrend online reporting system. Again, this helps ensure you make the best use of your time. In addition, a report to help identify these donors, the SYBUNTS report, is available through the online reporting system.
- Finally, reach out to everyone "In Pew Ask" – sometimes a person might not be registered at a parish but may attend Mass regularly or be active in other facets of parish life. Invite everyone to

make a gift and take the opportunity to share the stories of people helped by the ministries, schools, and apostolates supported by the Appeal.

- Send follow-up mailings – use the sample LYBUNT and SYBUNT letters provided on the DAA website.
- Make phone calls to those who have given in the past but not yet this year.
- Share the printed materials and the video to help motivate people to make a gift as you conduct the follow-up.
- Utilize the online reporting system – Use GivingTrend to review reports, see how close you are to your goals, and generate a list of donors who have not yet made a gift to this year's Appeal.
- Be Persistent—continue promoting the Appeal, following up with donors, and letting us know if we can help. Keep the Appeal in front of people with church bulletins, newsletters, announcements, or websites. Use different media to highlight the uses of the funds the Appeal generates.
- Track progress toward the target (target amount, pledge, cash total, the number or percentage of parishioners pledging).

IN PEW ASK

1. Provide brochures, blank pledge cards, envelopes, and pens in the pews or hand them out at Mass.
2. Volunteers should be present to help answer questions and collect pledge cards and payments.
3. Explain the procedure briefly for filling out the pledge card.
4. The Pastor should update parishioners on the progress of the Diocesan Annual Appeal.
5. Inform parishioners that no gift is too small and that the parish goal is 100% participation.
6. Remind parishioners of the benefits of your Parish achieving the target and receiving a rebate. Talk about the project you have planned to fund with the rebate.
7. Ask parishioners to write the following on their pledge card
 - a. If they are unable to commit – request a prayer pledge
 - b. If they would like to pledge - the amount of pledge
8. Suppose parishioners have already pledged; ask them not to complete a card unless they make an additional pledge. In that case, they then need to indicate that it is another pledge on the pledge card. Pledge cards from parishioners who already pledged and are not making a new pledge cause double pledge records, resulting in upset parishioners.
9. Ask the volunteers to collect the cards.
10. Volunteers should sort the cards after Mass.
11. Note any parishioners who are unable to donate. The Office for Stewardship and Development will record the zero pledges so they will not receive follow-up mailings.

OFFICE FOR STEWARDSHIP AND DEVELOPMENT EFFORTS:

The Office for Stewardship and Development will send out acknowledgment for all pledges. We also send thank you for all one-time gifts, the payments on pledges, and the final and fulfilling payment of a pledge.

Initial Mailing: A full roster mailing for parishes based on the direction of the pastor to the Stewardship office.

Followup Mailing (roughly 6 weeks after the initial mailing) - a mailing encourages pledge fulfillment and an LYBUNT/SYBUNT/Never ask is sent out for the calendar and tax year advantage.

Holy Week - an LYBUNT/SYBUNT mailing for parishes over their goal. Parishes that are under their goal; all who have not yet supported the mission yet this year will receive a full mailing.

Last week of May - LYBUNT mailing for parishes over goal are given one more opportunity to participate for the year. For parishes under goal, all who have not yet supported the mission this year will receive a full mailing

TELEPHONE FOLLOW-UP

After a parish has Amen Sunday, consider conducting a phone follow-up of parishioners who have not responded to the Diocesan Annual Appeal.

ORGANIZATION PROCEDURES:

1. Review the parishioners who have not pledged to the Diocesan Annual Appeal. The goal is to increase participation. Your highest success rate will be among parishioners who pledged last year but have not done so this year. The next highest success rate will be among parishioners who have given something in the past three years. Try to reach as many of these parishioners as possible.
2. Recruit a telephone-calling team. There should be enough volunteers for 20-30 calls per person. Ideal telephone callers have outgoing personalities and are comfortable making calls.
3. Select a central location with multiple phone lines for calling if possible. This will provide volunteer support and affirmation. Have resource people available to answer donor questions. If this is impossible, allow the volunteers to call from their homes.
4. Set a deadline for completing the work. Callers must return the names and notes to the Parish by a specified date.
5. If practical, let the volunteers select whom they will call.
6. Volunteers making the phone calls should be given pledge cards with the name and phone number of the parishioner they are calling, which are already prefilled. Volunteers must call only those parishioners assigned to them. If a donor does not wish to make a gift, write it on the pledge card and turn it in with the other cards. We track these, which helps us in future solicitations.
7. Before beginning to make calls, the callers should have a brief training session and read the Case Statement so they can answer questions about the Appeal's allocation of funds.
8. Practice using the sample telephone script and suggestions on the following page.
9. Show consideration by not calling during early or late hours or during meal times (ideally, call between 7:00 p.m. and 8:30 p.m.).
10. Announce at the preceding Mass that there will be a telephone follow-up for the Appeal. An announcement at Mass will prepare parishioners for the calls. Also, remind parishioners that they can pledge to the Diocesan Annual Appeal after Mass that day to avoid a call. Have blank pledge cards and pens available.
11. Before a call, Prayer is the most effective action that a member of the telephone calling team can take.

THINGS TO REMEMBER

- **DECEMBER 31:** The Office for Stewardship and Development, for tax purposes, will only accept payments for the current tax year, **postmarked** on or before December 31. The following calendar year's activity is any payment postmarked after December 31 that we receive in our office. **In adherence to federal and state laws and best accounting practices, we will not backdate gift processing for any reason.**

- **JUNE 30:** The Diocesan Fiscal Year is July 1 through June 30, and the annual appeal runs concurrently. For adherence to responsible and ethical fiscal management, we will process gifts based on the postmark's date. **In compliance with best accounting practices, we will not backdate gift processing for any reason.**
- **Shortfalls are to be paid via billing from the Temporalities office only.** The Parish will receive an invoice from the Finance Office (they are mailed out on August 15) and pay it then.

PHASE 3: THANK THE DONORS

"Gratitude is the mother of all virtues," and we see this in our Holy Mother, the model Steward; she is grateful for the great things the Lord has done for her. A grateful steward also celebrates the gifts of their community. One does not light a lamp just to put it under a basket. Create opportunities to thank and honor those who have made a gift.

BEST PRACTICES

- Say "thank you" often – as people turn in their pledge cards and gifts, let them know you are grateful for those they help through the Appeal.
- Send personalized thank-you notes or calls – invite the Pastor to send personal thank-you notes or make telephone calls. Remember to focus not on just the amount but the sacrificialness of the giving. Some may not give much, but their gift may be more of a percentage of their income than those who provide significant dollar amounts.
- Celebrate generosity – incorporate thanksgiving messages that celebrate faithful stewardship into the Faithful Prayers and ask the priest to include a "thank you" in his homily.

Share your success – publish actual statistics and recognition of donors and volunteers in the weekly bulletin.

OFFICE OF STEWARDSHIP AND DEVELOPMENT EFFORTS:

Following the close of the appeal, the S&D office will be working to reconcile the final numbers of the appeal. It will issue the final rebate checks and forward to Temporalities any shortfalls.

Unless the donor opts out, the Office for Stewardship and Development sends an acknowledgment of gratitude for every pledge received, initial pledge payment and payments, all one-time gifts. We generate these letters monthly and mail them to the donor.

We will separate gifts for dollar-amount giving levels, and the gratitude acknowledgments will be received in different forms. Remember, we do not know your parishioners as well as you do; someone may give a more sacrificial gift at a lower dollar level; it is good practice for the parish to acknowledge the proverbial "widow's mite."

Gift Level	Dollar Range		Acknowledgment
Our Lady of Lourdes	\$ 500.00	\$ 999.99	Standard
Saint Stanislaus	\$ 1,000.00	\$ 1,499.99	Standard
Saint Francis of Assisi	\$ 1,500.00	\$ 2,499.99	Standard with Director noted
Saint Joseph	\$ 2,500.00	\$ 4,999.99	Personal letter Director
Miter Society	\$ 5,000.00	\$ 9,999.99	Signed Letter from Bishop
Crozier	\$ 10,000.00		Personal Note from Bishop

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

All individuals involved in the Diocesan Annual Appeal should attend a Leadership Development session. The Office for Stewardship and Development holds training each year in several locations throughout the Diocese to instruct on the purpose and procedures of the Appeal. The day includes a Stewardship discussion and answering questions.

PASTOR, ASSOCIATE PASTOR, DEACON, & PASTORAL ASSOCIATE

Pastors, Associate Pastors, Deacons, and Pastoral Associates lead by their example, instruct, and motivate. They are essential to the success of the Diocesan Annual Appeal. Parishioners respond to their Pastor's spiritual direction, for instance, with enthusiasm, leadership, and confidence.

PRINCIPLE RESPONSIBILITIES:

1. Gives to the Diocesan Annual Appeal
2. Attends leadership development
3. Reads the Appeal materials thoroughly
4. Positively presents the goals and theme of the Appeal
5. Selects competent and enthusiastic lay leadership for the Appeal
6. Assists the Appeal leadership
7. Encourages parishioners to participate
8. Guides the Chairperson to form and carry out a plan, ensuring that every parishioner, whether they come to Mass or not, understands the Appeal's value and receives an invitation to participate
9. Promotes the Appeal positively at parish meetings
10. Speaks at Mass reporting on progress toward reaching the target and thanking current participants
11. Meets with the Chairperson on at least a monthly basis to review the Diocesan Annual Appeal progress
12. Initiates follow-up procedures

PARISH APPEAL CHAIRPERSON

The chair should be a well-respected member of the parish community who supports the Diocesan Annual Appeal's goals. In addition to knowing the Parish well, the chair should present the Appeal enthusiastically to fellow parishioners.

PRINCIPLE RESPONSIBILITIES:

1. Gives to the Diocesan Annual Appeal
2. Attends Leadership Development workshops
3. Assists the Pastor in carrying out the solicitation of parish members
4. Forms and carries out a plan, ensuring that every parishioner, whether they come to Mass or not, understands the appeal's value and receives an invitation to participate.
5. Enlists and trains volunteers to help carry out personal solicitations
6. Directs the distribution of Appeal materials
7. Audits GivingTrend reporting
8. Holds weekly report meetings for the volunteers
9. Promotes the Appeal positively at parish meetings
10. Speaks at Mass, along with the Pastor, reporting on progress toward reaching the target
11. Initiates follow-up procedures

APPEAL SECRETARY

The Appeal Secretary is the Diocesan Annual Appeal Coordinator in the Parish and is a vital link between the Parish and the Stewardship & Development Office. This person must know the Parish, be capable of keeping accurate records, and be enthusiastic about the Appeal.

PRINCIPLE RESPONSIBILITIES:

1. Gives to the Diocesan Annual Appeal
2. Attends leadership development
3. Reads the Appeal materials thoroughly
4. Assists the Pastor and the Chairperson in carrying out the program of solicitation
5. Attends all DAA meetings
6. Maintain parish records
7. Updates the Google Forms for Parish Contact information; found via <http://appeal.dioc.org>
8. Contact the Office for Stewardship and Development with any questions.

VOLUNTEERS

Volunteers are the foundation of the Diocesan Annual Appeal at the parish level. They should be knowledgeable and enthusiastically promote the Appeal's positive impact on parish life. There should be a minimum of one volunteer for every eight families in the Parish.

PRINCIPLE RESPONSIBILITIES:

1. Gives to the Diocesan Annual Appeal
2. Read the Appeal materials thoroughly
3. Visits and promotes the Appeal positively to other parishioners
4. Follow up with households they have contacted in a timely and appropriate manner
5. Attends weekly report meetings to share their progress and success
6. Helps distribute materials as necessary, possibly through parish mailings and after-Mass events
7. Contact parishioners who have not pledged
8. Monitor payment towards pledges, reminding those with phone calls who fall behind
9. Reports and turns in all pledges and contributions to the Appeal Secretary

OFFICE FOR STEWARDSHIP AND DEVELOPMENT

The Office for Stewardship and Development supports the parish efforts of the Diocesan Annual Appeal. Therefore, the office should be knowledgeable about the Appeal's impact on parish life so that, individually and as a team, we can enthusiastically promote and support parish efforts by providing training, guides, and best practices.

PRINCIPLE RESPONSIBILITIES:

1. The staff gives to the Diocesan Annual Appeal.
2. Read the Appeal materials thoroughly.
3. Visits and promotes the Appeal positively to others in the Curia, parishes, and the public.
4. Ensures the use of the best source data to the office for mailing and donor correspondence
5. Communicates always with donors, staff, and parishes about issues and opportunities as they develop
6. Distribute materials as necessary, possibly through parish mailings, meet with councils and committees, and attend after-mass events as requested.
7. Ensure timely mailings of acknowledgments and reminders.
8. Develop and distribute compelling and quality promotional materials
9. Educate and promote Stewardship as an encounter with Christ
10. Maintain a high level of parish and donor satisfaction as it pertains to processing reporting of gifts

EVANGELIZATION:

USING NEWSLETTERS, BULLETINS & ANNOUNCEMENTS

Evangelization plays a vital role in your parish effort's success by using the means available to stimulate donors to pledge their financial support. It is crucial to help the donor connect the Appeal with the Church worldwide, the Diocese, and, more directly, your Parish by explaining how the Parish will use the funds and benefit the common good. Your chances of success improve by following the best practices below.

AMBO:

The Pastor or Chairperson of the Diocesan Annual Appeal should make announcements during September, October, and November to keep the parishioners abreast of progress toward reaching their goal. Progress reports are available on GivingTrend, which updates daily during the business week. Prepare and write the announcement to remain uniform and factual, no matter who makes it.

BULLETIN ANNOUNCEMENTS:

Bulletins are an essential way to remind parishioners about the Appeal's message and the benefit that it will have to your Parish. Consider using bulletins to report progress, thank the parish Appeal leadership, and remind parishioners of your Parish's progress and the importance of reaching its target.

MONTHLY NEWSLETTERS:

A newsletter is a great vehicle to carry the Appeal message in a permanent printed form and continually form our parishioners to Christian Stewardship. Repetition for emphasis is always valid. Studies have shown that we retain only 10% of what we hear, and a person needs to listen to a consistent message seven times before they begin to believe and internalize a message. Therefore, the newsletter provides an opportunity to reinforce the importance of time, talent, and treasure and recognize your parish Appeal leaders.

ANNOUNCEMENTS COULD INCLUDE THE FOLLOWING:

- Highlight an aspect of the case statement each weekend. Use a real-life example
- Remind parishioners of the importance of a rebate by highlighting what it will fund
- An update on the progress your Parish is making toward reaching your target
- Each week mentions the Appeal in the prayers of the faithful
- Ask parishioners to pray a Hail Mary for the success of the Appeal

VISUAL AIDS:

As a constant reminder of the Appeal and its importance to the greater Church and your Parish, it is essential that you:

- Display your posters in a prominent location. The Office for Stewardship and Development will have these available at the Diocesan Annual Appeal training workshops. In addition, you can order extras through the Office for Stewardship and Development.
- Show the Appeal video many times after the initial showing. Consider placing a small T.V. showing the video in the vestibule or another gathering location of the Church before and after Masses.

- Have brochures, In-Pew pledge cards, envelopes, and pens always available.

PARISH TARGETS

Each Parish target is a fair share of the Diocesan Annual Appeal goal. No parish has more than 2.66% of the overall goal as their target. The goal for the 2024 – 2025 Diocesan Annual Appeal is \$6,000,000.00.

Data from the 2022-23 (last available) Annual Report determines the goals.

- The number of envelope holders who give \$100 or more per year
- Parish adult envelope income,
- The amount of money a parish spends on K-12 Catholic school education that is separate from tuition income,
- The number of parish students enrolled in Catholic Schools

TARGET FORMULA

VARIABLE A:

Line 16 (401): The adult envelope receipts for a parish as a percentage of the total adult envelope receipts for the Diocese for the 2022-2023 fiscal year.

VARIABLE B:

The number of envelope holders who contribute at least \$100.00 per year to a parish is a percentage of the total number of envelope holders who give \$100.00 or more to the Diocese for the 2022-23 fiscal year.

VARIABLE C: SCHOOL CALCULATION 1:

Line 102B (School and Convent), for a parish as a percentage of Line 102 for the total for the Diocese. This percentage is then multiplied by \$690,000 = C.

VARIABLE D: SCHOOL CALCULATION 2:

The total number of students enrolled in Catholic schools multiplied by \$88.00 = D.

Step 1. $A + B \times \$6,690,139 = Y$ (Y = DAA Parish Target + Total School Credits)

Step 2. $Y - (D+C) = \text{Parish Target}$

Step 3. Adjustments and reallocations are necessary so that no parish targets increase or decrease by no more than 10%. Nor does a parish target change more than a -\$2,500 decrease or \$10,000 increase.

PARISH REBATES

Parishes receive 100% of all funds the Office of Stewardship and Development processes over the target for a parish. These Rebate checks are issued monthly, during the second week of the month, beginning in January, with a final reconciliation rebate in July. Parish rebates are not included in the envelope receipts used to calculate the target, nor are they used to derive the Cathedraticum, i.e., the Quota. Outstanding balances for money owed for any previous year's Appeals will reduce the rebate checks paid.

PARISH RESPONSIBILITY

All parishes must meet the target assigned to them by June 30. Follow this manual's procedures and best practices for a parish to have the best chance of raising the target funds. The Diocese of La Crosse Finance Office will bill parishes monthly that do not reach their target's outstanding balance target. In addition, the

Finance Office applies an interest charge at an annualized rate of 6% for any outstanding balances. Please address these payments to the Diocesan Office for Temporalities in La Crosse for target shortfalls.



TIMETABLE

KICKOFF – STEWARDSHIP SUNDAY

September 2024 – October 2024

New: Parishes will have more flexibility to choose what weekend to select for their kickoff weekend.

Best Practice

- Week 1 Stewardship /Announcement Weekend informs parishioners of the upcoming mailing.
- Week 2 Commitment Weekend – Priests to announce the Appeal and show a video
- Week 3 Amen Sunday – Thank all those who

DECEMBER 2024

- December 31 – Year-end donations must be postmarked by 12/31/2024 to qualify for 2024 tax year credits.

MARCH 2024

- April 13 is the Holy Week Mailing for all parishes: LYBUNTS/SYBUNTS for those over goal, and any parish under goal will include LYBUNT SYBUNTS and New/Never-givers.

MAY 2024

- Last week of May 2024 End of Year Mailing: All LYBUNTS and any parish under goal will include SYBUNTS and New/Never-givers.

Gifts postmarked on or before December 31, 2024, will be included in the 2024 tax statement. Please encourage your supporters to mail their payment prior to December 20, 2024. We suggest encouraging your supporters to mail their payment prior to December 20, 2024, to reach us at the office.

SEND ALL PAYMENTS TO THE DIOCESAN ANNUAL APPEAL OFFICE.

Send them directly to the address:

**Diocese of La Crosse
PO Box 4004
La Crosse, WI 54602-4004**

Encouraging Electronic Giving is an easier, efficient, and secure way to make timely gifts. For the tax year 2024, donors will have until 11:59 PM on 12/31/2024 to make last-minute gifts.

Share the link: <https://diolc.org/donate-online/>

JANUARY 2025

- January 14, 2025 -The Office for Stewardship and Development will run the first "Parish Fund Progress" report from Raiser's Edge. This report will be the source for calculating rebates. The following Friday, the Office for Stewardship and Development will mail rebate checks to the parishes with cash received exceeding their target.
- January 31, 2025 - The Office for Stewardship and Development mails tax acknowledgments to all donors who have not indicated they do not want tax statements. For single gifts under \$250.00, parishioners can

use their check stubs/receipts for tax purposes. If a donor does not receive a tax statement, they may request one by calling the Stewardship office at 608-791-2653.

FEBRUARY 2025

- February 11 - The Office for Stewardship and Development mails rebate checks to parishes that exceeded their target in cash.

MARCH 2025

- March 11 - The Office for Stewardship and Development mails rebate checks to parishes that exceed their cash target.

APRIL 2025

- April 08 - The Office for Stewardship and Development mails rebate checks to parishes that exceed their cash target.
- April 11 - The Holy Week Mailing is mailed

MAY 2025

- May 12- The Office for Stewardship and Development mails rebate checks to parishes that exceeded their target in cash.
- May 23 – Final Mailing

JUNE 2025

- June 09 - The Office for Stewardship and Development mails rebate checks to parishes that exceed their cash target.
- All postmarked mail on or before 6/30/2025 will be applied to this year's Appeal; all correspondence postmarked after 6/30/2025 will be applied to the following year's Appeal.
- June 30 - The Diocesan Annual Appeal –closes

Gifts postmarked on or before June 30, 2025, will be credited to the current year's Appeal. To be fair to all parishes, *there will be no exceptions.* **We will apply any postmarked gifts after June 30, 2025, to the 2025-26 Annual Appeal.** We suggest mailing your payment early in June to reach us in time. We will credit all online donations made before June 30, 2025, at 11:59 PM to the 2024-2025 Annual Appeal. Please direct donors to the online giving portal at <https://diolc.org/donate-online/>

SEND ALL PAYMENTS TO THE DIOCESAN ANNUAL APPEAL OFFICE.

Send them to

**Diocese of La Crosse,
PO Box 4004,
La Crosse, WI 54602-4004.**

REPORTS AND FORMS

GIVINGTREND

GivingTrend (<https://diolc.givingtrend.org>) is the diocesan reporting subscription for authorized Diocesan Annual Appeal staff and volunteers. GivingTrend updates daily during the regular workweek with the previous business day's activities. Parish leadership is encouraged to use all data on the GivingTrend website to report and promote the Diocesan Annual Appeal. However, private and personal information is available on the site, so extreme care and judiciousness are required to protect our donors' dignity and data.

We have deployed scanning technology in our office. As a result, we have significantly reduced processing times, improved accuracy, and realized lower processing costs because of this technology. The software allows us to scan electronically, process, and transmit remittance advice (pledge cards) and checks. The system uses Image Cash Letter technology to send and deposit the check images. The same technology stores use when they scan your check and give it back to you.

Parishes and donors have benefited from the faster process times, which is crucial for an accurate report of the Parish's progress. In addition, parishes can review the information, providing more fabulous parishioner service when a parishioner inquires about their gifts.

The Diocesan Annual Appeal uses standardized pledge cards. All pledge cards utilize 2D scan coding to match the donor to the Parish's annual appeal fund. If you are considering sending the parish appeal remittance advice directly from the Parish, don't hesitate to contact the Office for Stewardship and Development for document requirements. **Any remittance advice that does not comply with our standards will experience delays in processing for up to 30 days**, depending upon the volume of gift processing the Office for Stewardship and Development encounters.

If you still need to register for GivingTrend, please go to <http://appeal.diolc.org/> for a link to the registration form and training video.

DIRECT MAIL PRE-PRINTED

(Sample below) Each mailed card will have a 2D scan code containing the Donor's Raisers Edge ID, the Parish ID, and other pertinent processing information. The parishioners' names and addresses will personalize each card.

FRONT OF THE DIRECT MAIL CARD

<Parish Name>

One-Time Gift (Paid in Full) Monthly Pledge (Monthly until 6/30/2018)
 Sustaining Member Gift (indefinite monthly withdrawal)

Please select one of the following amounts

\$000 \$000 \$000 Other: \$_____

\$000 \$000 \$000

Total Amount Pledged \$_____ Total Amount Enclosed \$_____

Make check payable to Diocese of La Crosse

(Note: See reverse side for Electronic Fund Transfers (EFT) and Credit Card payments information. Gift of Securities, Stock or Grain, please call Finance Office 608-781-2668.)



Stewards of HOPE
WE ARE THE DIOCESE



Please do not send reminders.
 Please do not send Acknowledgment/Thank You.
 Please do not send Tax Statements.
 This gift is anonymous.

<00000000-000-IM0917-0000>
Sample A. Sample
123 Any Street
Anytown, US 12345-6789

BACK OF THE DIRECT MAIL CARD

Sustaining Gift, I authorize the Diocese of La Crosse to automatically withdraw from my checking account or debit my credit card account on the 15th of every month. Donations will continue indefinitely until notification to cancel is given to the Diocese of La Crosse.

For Electronic Funds Transfer from a checking account, please enclose a voided check.

Credit Card: VISA MASTERCARD DISCOVER AMERICAN EXPRESS

Card Number: _____

3-digit Security Code: _____ Exp. Date: ____ / ____

Cardholder Name _____

Email _____

Signature _____ Date _____

By signing, I authorize the Diocese of La Crosse to debit/charge my account as listed above.

Thank you for your support

GIVE ONLINE
<https://diolc.org/donate-online/>

"IN-PEW" PLEDGE CARDS

(Sample below). This card will not have personal information but some necessary coding information in the 2D code, including the Parish ID. These are useful for "In Pew Asks," new parishioners who have misplaced their original pledge card, visitors, and Amen Sundays. These cards have lines where people can put their name, address, and parish name. The Stewardship & Development Office will assign the account numbers for unregistered supporters using these pledge cards. For all supporters who are also in your ParishSoft database, we will use their ParishSoft ID. Therefore, **be sure they use a card** with your parish name for proper credit. Donors should complete the card, specifically their name and address. A completed card is necessary so the correct Parish receives credit for the pledge and payments and sends reminders to parishioners.

FRONT OF THE IN PEW CARD

BACK OF THE IN-PEW CARD

Sustaining Gift, I authorize the Diocese of La Crosse to automatically withdraw from my checking account or debit my credit card account on the 15th of every month. Donations will continue indefinitely until notification to cancel is given to the Diocese of La Crosse.

For Electronic Funds Transfer from a checking account, please enclose a voided check.

Credit Card: VISA MASTERCARD DISCOVER AMERICAN EXPRESS

Card Number: _____

3-digit Security Code: _____ Exp. Date: ____ / ____

Cardholder Name _____

Email _____

Signature _____ Date _____

By signing, I authorize the Diocese of La Crosse to debit/charge my account as listed above.

Thank you for your support

GIVE ONLINE
<https://diolc.org/donate-online/>

PARISH INFORMATION FORM

We use a Google Form to update and maintain the parish contact information for the Diocesan Annual Appeal. Complete the form report as soon as possible. In addition, submit changes in contact information to the Office for Stewardship and Development via this form.

PROCESSING OF GIFTS

All mailing from the Office for Stewardship and Development includes a return envelope so parishioners can send their initial pledge and contributions directly to the Office for Stewardship and Development for processing. Therefore, every week, parishes should send any funds they collect from parishioners to the Office for Stewardship and Development:

**Diocese of La Crosse
Office for Stewardship and Development
P.O. Box 4004
La Crosse, WI 54602-4004**

PLEASE DO NOT HOLD PAYMENTS OR PLEDGES.

Keeping payments or pledges at the Parish has a significant effect on the Parish's overall Appeal status because of delays in sending in payments and pledges:

1. Delays our ability to promptly send monthly reminders or make ACH or credit card payments, reducing the probability of collecting all pledges by the end of June.
2. Annoy the parishioners when they have made a payment; it does not reflect on their reminder or because it has not cleared their bank account.
3. Increases the chances of lost or misplaced payments.
4. Hurts the potential for success by diminishing its momentum and credibility.

Checks should be made payable to the *Diocese of La Crosse*. However, the bank will accept checks made payable to the Diocesan Annual Appeal, and We are the Diocese, the Appeal name, e.g., His Church, Bishop's Appeal, or any parish name. **Remittance advice (pledge card) should accompany all payments.**

NOT ALL GIFTS HAVE PLEDGES ASSOCIATED WITH THEM.

Cash Gifts are one-time donations; gift payments that match or exceed the total amount pledged on the remittance advice are not pledged gifts; these gifts are one-time cash. The only gifts for which the payment represents only a partial payment of the amount pledged generate a pledge. This accounting of pledge gifts allows for greater transparency for open balances.

For example:

J. Smith sends a check for \$1,000, and the remittance advice (pledge card) has \$1,000 written in the pledge amount. This gift is a one-time cash gift and will not have a pledge.

Meanwhile, J. Smith sent a check for \$100, and the remittance advice (pledge card) had \$1,000 written in the pledge amount. This gift has an open balance of \$900.00 and will have a pledge.

Pledged gifts require multiple payments to fulfill.

WHAT TO DO WITH GIFTS AND PLEDGES RECEIVED AT THE PARISH

Please proofread all remittance advice (pledge cards). Ensure all lines are completed and legible, especially the parishioner's name, parish name, and credit card information. If they do not have remittance advice (pledge card), please use one of the parishes' "in-pew" remittance advice.

1. Put the remittance advice on top of the corresponding payment.

DO NOT SEND CASH

Send remittance directly to The Office for Stewardship and Development:

Diocese of La Crosse
P.O. Box 4004
La Crosse, WI 54602-4004

2. **PLEASE DO NOT SEND CASH.** If a donor gives cash, deposit the cash into a parish account and issue a parish check for that amount. Please complete remittance advice (pledge card) with the donor's name, amount donated, and ParishSoft ID and include it with the check. If the check is for more than one donor, please specify this, complete a pledge card for each, and include them with the check. Money orders are accepted.
3. Refer all gifts of stock, grains, or other property and commodities to the Director of Temporalities, James Reider, Finance Officer (608) 791-2668, jreider@diolc.org.
4. The Office for Stewardship and Development sends reminders for unpaid pledges to the parishioner monthly.

ELECTRONIC PAYMENT OPTIONS

SUSTAINING GIFT

A Sustaining Gift is a gift that a member donates monthly for 12 months. Their donations automatically apply to the current year's Appeal. The Sustaining Gift payments are transacted on the 15th of the month. Deductions will begin at the nearest transaction date and continue each month until further notice. A sustaining member can give electronically by EFT from their checking account or debit/credit card.

ELECTRONIC FUNDS TRANSFER (EFT)

To initiate EFT payments, provide the information requested on the back of the pledge card (see sample card below), send a blank voided check with the pledge card, and send both to the Office for Stewardship and Development. If a donor includes an initial payment, with a request for EFT of the remaining pledge, send the pledge card, voided check, and the initial payment to the Office for Stewardship and Development.

If parishioners wish to modify or stop any electronic payment, they must contact the Office for Stewardship and Development directly (Sarah Komperud at 608-791-2653 or skomperud@diolc.org). To comply with federal banking regulations that govern electronic payments, modifications to EFT funds must be made in writing. Email is an acceptable format of "in-writing."

A SAMPLE OF THE BACK OF A PLEDGE CARD:

Sustaining Gift, I authorize the Diocese of La Crosse to automatically withdraw from my checking account or debit my credit card account on the 15th of every month. Donations will continue indefinitely until notification to cancel is given to the Diocese of La Crosse.

For Electronic Funds Transfer from a checking account, please enclose a voided check.

Credit Card: VISA MASTERCARD DISCOVER AMERICAN EXPRESS

Card Number: _____

3-digit Security Code: _____ Exp. Date: ____ / ____

Cardholder Name _____

Email _____

Signature _____ Date _____

By signing, I authorize the Diocese of La Crosse to debit/charge my account as listed above.

*Thank you for
your support*

GIVE ONLINE
<https://diolc.org/donate-online/>

CREDIT CARD PAYMENT OPTION

Donors can make Credit Card payments in two ways:

1. By making the payment online.

Log on to <https://diolc.org/donate-online/>. This online donation is probably the most convenient for the parishioner: there is nothing to mail or a card to fill out. Just go to the website and fill in the blanks.

2. By the Diocesan Annual Appeal Office.

Suppose the parishioner wants the Appeal Office to process their credit card payment. In that case, they must complete section #2 under "Credit Card Information" on the back of the pledge card (see the above sample) and mail it to the Office for Stewardship and Development. Again, an email address request is necessary for a donor to receive a receipt.

Questions and Resources for help

If you have any questions or comments or need additional help with the Annual Appeal, please call the Office for Stewardship and Development:

Sarah Komperud – skomperud@diolc.org – 608-791-2653

Jeff Reiter – jreiter@diolc.org

APPENDIX

STEWARDSHIP SUNDAY

Stewardship Sunday is a day to announce the Diocesan Annual Appeal and your parish efforts. This Sunday is also the appropriate time to announce your parish target for the Appeal and what project you will fund with your rebate.

PROCEDURES:

1. Show the Diocesan Annual Appeal video. To make the video presentation successful, consider the following before the showing:
 - a. Can each person in the Church see the screen? Do you need to have more than one screen throughout the Church?
 - b. Does the audio work? Will everyone be able to hear the video? Is it possible to connect the audio through the Church's sound system? Make sure that you do a 'test run' before Mass!
 - c. Will the lighting be a problem? Sometimes, natural light can make it difficult to see a T.V. screen. Is there another option you could use (e.g., a larger screen or several T.V.s throughout the Church)?
 - d. Is there a parishioner who works for an electronics store or is knowledgeable about video/T.V. equipment? Is there an electronics store that might donate the use of a large screen? Use your resources!
 - e. Consider showing the video on a T.V. in the lobby of your Church as parishioners walk in or during social events after Mass.
2. Give an oral presentation at the end of the liturgy.
 - f. They are presented by the Pastor or designated layperson.
 - g. Encourage parishioners to reflect on the needs of others and their ability to pledge to the Diocesan Annual Appeal in preparation for Commitment Sunday.
 - h. Briefly explain the process for pledging. Emphasize that a pledge can be payable over a period concluding June 30.

SAMPLE STEWARDSHIP SUNDAY PRESENTATION

The script below exemplifies what might be shared with your parish community on Stewardship Sunday. The parish presenter should use it only to help in developing their presentation.

Good evening/morning/ afternoon,

At this time each year, our attention is directed to the needs of the greater church community, and we are asked to renew our commitment to support the Diocese with our time, talent, treasure, and prayers.

We are grateful for your past support and hope you will continue supporting the Diocesan Annual Appeal this year. This year, the Diocese has asked our Parish to contribute \$_____ as our portion of the Diocesan Annual Appeal goal of _____. This goal is easily attainable with everyone's participation, and we hope that all will participate. We ask that every household consider making a gift to the Appeal.

In his first letter to the Corinthians, St. Paul reminds us that "we are God's co-workers." (1 Corinthians 3:9). We are all called to participate in Christ's mission through baptism. In the name of Jesus, the Diocese of La Crosse embraces the same mission so that everyone under his care might "have life and have it more abundantly." All the ministries supported by the Annual Appeal participate in this same life-giving mission, including the work of Catholic Charities, as it helps people rebuild their lives after floods or other disasters, assists couples seeking to adopt a child, or offers personal or financial counseling to a struggling family.

Funds from the Annual Appeal go to caring for our retired priests who have given a lifetime of service and forming seminarians and deacon candidates preparing to begin their ministry to the faithful of our Diocese. The Annual Appeal also supports the Church's ministry to Hmong and Hispanic immigrants in our midst and enables the production of the T.V. Mass for those homebound by age or health. The Appeal also supports Catholic education with direct subsidies and assistance to parishes and individuals.

These are only some of the ministries supported by the Diocesan Annual Appeal. As you can see, they all share the goal of fostering abundant life in Christ—the life of the body and the life of the soul.

If we, as a parish, meet our goal, more money is available for our parish needs. All additional funds received after our target is met are refunded to our Parish. This year, we hope to fund _____ with our rebate, including [specific needs]. During this next week, please consider making a gift. On commitment Sunday, we will ask you to make your Commitment during Mass. Please remember to pray for the success of the Diocesan Annual Appeal in our Parish.

COMMITMENT SUNDAY

Commitment Sunday allows parishioners to commit yearly to their Diocese and Universal Church by completing the Diocesan Annual Appeal pledge card. Pastors should speak about the Appeal during Mass. If there is an after-Mass event, make pledge cards available for parishioners to complete.

PROCEDURES:

1. During Mass
 - a. Present the Diocesan Annual Appeal as an opportunity to give in proportion to the many blessings received from God. Do not apologize for the appeal; instead, show that this is their opportunity to practice stewardship and participate in the broader Church.
 - b. Highlight the benefits of your Parish reaching your Appeal target and achieving a rebate.
 - c. Be enthusiastic and speak with conviction.
 - d. Encourage 100% parish participation. (A \$1 or \$0 pledge is better than no pledge.)
 - e. Provide facts and concrete examples of how the diocese supports your Parish. People are more likely to give if they see a connection between the Parish and the diocese.
 - f. Make brochures, blank pledge cards, and pencils available to all present. Encourage parishioners who have not already done so to support the appeal by completing pledge cards and turning them in with the collection. **Emphasize that if parishioners have already pledged, ASK THEM ONLY TO COMPLETE A CARD IF they make an additional pledge; they then need to indicate on the pledge card that it is an additional pledge.** (Pledge cards from parishioners who already pledged and are not making an additional pledge cause pledges to be recorded twice by the Diocesan Annual Appeal Office, resulting in double pledges and upset parishioners.)
 - g. Tell parishioners they do not have to make an initial payment; that statement will be mailed to them at the beginning of the month.
 - h. Promote the idea of pledging over a period of time since it enables people to give more than they could with a one-time gift. (Final payment needs to be made before June 30.)
 - i. Introduce the convenience of paying pledges
 - i. by going on to the Diocesan website or parish website if the Parish requested a form from the Stewardship office and entering the Credit Card /EFT information
 - ii. by completing the back of the pledge card with the credit card/EFT information
 - j. Volunteers should be present to help distribute pledge cards, answer questions, and collect pledge cards and payments.
2. After-Mass
 - a. Choose a convenient place for the event and provide light refreshments (if appropriate).
 - b. Brochures and pledge cards should be arranged on tables with pens and envelopes for parishioners wishing to pledge.
 - c. Volunteers should be present to help distribute pledge cards, answer questions, and collect pledge cards and payments.
 - d. Explain briefly the procedure for filling out the pledge card.

SAMPLE COMMITMENT SUNDAY PRESENTATION

The script below exemplifies what might be shared with your parish community on Commitment Sunday. The parish presenter should use it only to help in developing their presentation.

Good evening/morning/afternoon,

Today, on this Commitment Sunday, we, as a diocese, our Pastor, and our Parish, are here to ask for your essential commitment to the Diocesan Annual Appeal. Our goal is to reach [specific target amount]. Your pledge is a financial contribution and a symbol of your dedication to our greater Catholic Community.

"As your Pastor, I want to thank all of you who have given to this appeal in past years and have responded to a recent mailing from the diocese. I can assure you that the people served by diocesan ministries deeply appreciate the funds you gave."

As part of this unified community, each of us plays a crucial role in attaining the goal of 100% participation. Our collective effort is what makes our greater Catholic Community strong. I want to share why I support the Diocesan Annual Appeal and encourage you to join me in this vital endeavor.

God has blessed my family and me in many different ways. I have the responsibility and opportunity to share these blessings with others. By supporting the Diocesan Annual Appeal, we are all recognizing the blessings given to us and doing our part to share these gifts with those in need. This shared commitment strengthens our community and our faith.

When pooled together, our gifts profoundly impact our local community. They support crucial initiatives such as Catholic Charities, the training of future priests, youth ministry, and children's religious education.

Your gift to the appeal not only helps this diocese but also supports eleven special collections no longer held in our parishes: the Catholic Church's efforts in Latin America, Eastern Europe, and the Catholic Home Missions in the United States, to mention a few. Your contribution is not just vital; it's invaluable to these missions and makes a significant difference in the lives of many.

The appeal also helps the life of our Parish since anything we raise beyond our target is returned to our Parish for our use. This year, we hope to use this money for [specific use of surplus funds, e.g., to improve parish facilities, support local community initiatives, etc.].

If you brought your personal pledge card, please verify that your information is correct and turn it in today.

We also have a pledge card specific to our Parish available at the back of the Church if you need one.

If you have already pledged, please do not fill out another card unless you make an additional pledge.

Thank you from the bottom of our hearts for your help and support of the Diocesan Annual Appeal. Your commitment is truly appreciated and makes a significant difference in our community.

AMEN SUNDAY

Amen Sunday is a significant event in our parishes and serves a critical purpose. It is a day dedicated to encouraging gifts from parishioners who have not yet pledged to the Appeal. We kindly ask all parishioners to participate, even if it means writing a zero on the pledge card.

For best results, please follow the in-pew solicitation process meticulously. Even in the most mature appeals, only about 20% of parish households donate in the first mailing. Even though parish members will receive the mailing, many will not respond to it because they are not interested in giving, and many ignore direct mail appeals. Also, many others are not registered at their Parish and do not receive the mailing.

This method has proven the most effective in obtaining pledges from families rather than simply inviting them to take pledge cards and envelopes home or stop at a table. The in-pew process ensures that each parishioner who attends Mass understands that they are being asked to consider pledging at that time.

PROCEDURES:

1. Provide brochures, blank pledge cards, envelopes, and pens in the pews or hand them out at Mass.
2. Our dedicated volunteers play a crucial role in this process. They are here to assist, answer questions, and collect pledge cards and payments. Their presence is invaluable and greatly appreciated.
3. Explain briefly the procedure for filling out the pledge card.
4. The Pastor should update parishioners on the progress of the Diocesan Annual Appeal.
5. Remember, no gift is too large or too small. The Parish's goal is not just a financial target but a symbol of the collective commitment to the faith community. We aim for 100% participation, as each pledge, no matter the amount, contributes to the vibrancy of our Parish.
6. Remind parishioners of the benefits of your Parish achieving the target and receiving a rebate. Talk about the project you have planned to fund with the rebate.
7. Ask parishioners to write the following on their pledge card:
 - a. If they are unable to pledge - 0
 - b. If they would like to pledge - Amount of Pledge
8. If parishioners have already pledged, ask them not to complete a card unless they are making an additional pledge; they then need to indicate on the pledge card that it is an additional pledge.
Pledge cards from parishioners who have already pledged and are not making an additional pledge cause pledges to be double-recorded by the Stewardship Office, resulting in upset parishioners.
9. Ask the volunteers to collect the cards.
10. Send the collected pledge cards to the Stewardship Office ASAP.
 - a. Delays can cause shortened billing periods; the Appeal ends on June 30
 - b. Delays in cashing checks from donors frustrate parishioners' bank reconciliations
 - c. Delays could result in the parishioners receiving additional request mailings

SAMPLE AMEN SUNDAY PRESENTATION

This script is an example of what might be shared with your parish community on Amen Sunday. The Pastor should use it only to help develop his presentation.

As we consider our sacrificial gifts to the Diocesan Annual Appeal, let's remember that we have options. You can pledge a gift payable over several months, concluding on June 30. Or, you can opt for a Sustainable gift over 12 months, which allows you to contribute in a manageable way over a more extended period.

We are called to share our gifts to support the Church through baptism. We must first help our Parish, Diocese, and the Church worldwide. The Diocesan Annual Appeal is a very effective way to support ministries outside our parish boundaries and the services the diocese provides to our Parish.

As your Pastor, I want to thank all of you who have already given to the Diocesan Annual Appeal, as I also have. I can assure you that the funds you gave are deeply appreciated by the Parish, schools, and people served by the ministries supported throughout the diocese.

At this time, I ask the ushers to pass out the pledge cards, envelopes, and pencils; even if you cannot donate today, you can still submit a pledge, and the Stewardship office will send you a reminder. If you have already given or pledged and do not wish to do so again, you do not need to take the materials from the ushers.

(Pause and make sure that everyone has received the materials. Don't forget those standing or in the cry room, choir loft, etc. Once everyone has a pledge card, continue with the script.)

I will now lead you through the pledge process to limit the time it takes.

Please print your first and last name on the front of the card where it says 'Your Name.' Then print your completed address on 'Address' and 'City, State, Zip.' If you have already pledged to the Diocesan Annual Appeal, please do not fill out a card unless you want to make an additional pledge (then indicate at the top of the card 'additional pledge. ') We respect your privacy and do not wish to double-record your pledge.

You will notice that you can opt out of Reminders, Acknowledgements, and Tax statements. If you do not check these boxes, these will be sent to you automatically.

If you want information on Wills and Estate Planning, check the box requesting to send the information, and the Stewardship office will send you the information.

(Pause until about half of those participating are looking back at you.)

To pledge, check the "Monthly Pledge" box on the right-hand side of the "Total Pledge." If you are making an initial payment on your pledge, fill in the "Total Amount

Enclosed." You will receive a reminder for your pledge every month through June of next year until the pledge is paid in full.

For example, a gift of \$20 a month would be monthly until June of next year. The pledge needs to be paid in full by June 30.

(Pause until about half of those participating are looking back at you.)

The back of the pledge card contains a series of electronic payment options. These are safe and secure methods of payment. Check the box in front of the option you prefer. If you are making an initial payment or just a pledge at this time and want to receive monthly reminders, just put the initial payment and your pledge card in the envelope and place it in the basket; we will make sure it gets to the Stewardship office for processing.

(Pause until about half of those participating are looking back at you.)

"When you have completed your payment options, please sign your pledge card on the front, date it, and fill in our parish name and city, as well as your email address if you have one."

(Pause until about half of those participating are looking back at you.)

"Last, there are a couple boxes at the bottom of the right-hand side of the front of the pledge card. Please check these boxes if you DO NOT want tax statements, reminders, acknowledgments, or thank you letters."

(Pause until about half of those participating are looking back at you.)

"For those of you with questions, we will have people available after Mass to answer them. For those of you who have completed your pledge cards, please insert them in the envelope and seal the envelopes, and we will collect them at this time."

"I thank you for participating in the Diocesan Annual Appeal on behalf of Bishop Battersby, all whose lives are touched by its works, and myself."

May God bless you.

TELEPHONE FOLLOW-UP

Following Amen Sunday, it is crucial to consider conducting a phone follow-up of parishioners who have not yet responded to the Diocesan Annual Appeal. This follow-up is critical for increasing participation and ensuring the appeal's success.

PROCEDURES:

1. Review the parishioners who have not pledged to the Diocesan Annual Appeal. Your participation is crucial to our success. The goal is to increase participation, and your highest success rate will be among parishioners who pledged last year but have not done so this year (LYBUNT). The next highest success rate will be among parishioners who have given something in the past three years (SYBUNT). Try to reach as many of these parishioners as possible.
2. It is essential to assemble a well-prepared and trained telephone-calling team. Each volunteer should be comfortable making calls and have an outgoing personality. The team should be large enough to handle 20-30 calls per person, ensuring that each parishioner is reached effectively.
3. If possible, select a central location with multiple telephone lines for calling. A central calling station will provide you with the necessary support and affirmation. Have resource people available to answer donor questions. If this is impossible, allow the volunteers to call from their homes.
4. Setting a deadline for completing the work is essential to promoting the efficiency of follow-up. Callers must return the names and notes to the Parish by a specified date, ensuring the follow-up process is completed promptly.
5. If practical, let the volunteers select whom they will call.
6. Volunteers making the phone calls should be given pledge cards with the name and phone number of the parishioner to be called on it. Volunteers must call only those parishioners assigned to them. If a donor does not wish to make a gift, write it on the pledge card and turn it in with the other cards.
7. Before beginning to make calls, the callers should have a brief training session and read the Case Statement so they can answer questions about how Appeal funds will be spent.
8. Practice using the sample telephone script and suggestions on the following page.
9. Show consideration by not calling during early or late hours or during meal times (ideally, call between 7:00 p.m. and 8:30 p.m.). We respect your privacy and will ensure that our calls are made at appropriate times.
10. Announce at the preceding weekend Mass that there will be a telephone follow-up for the appeal. Announcing this will prepare parishioners for the calls. Also, remind parishioners that they can pledge to the Diocesan Annual Appeal after Mass that day to avoid a call. Have blank pledge cards and pens available.
11. Prayer before a call is the most effective action that a member of the telephone calling team can take.

Follow-up Telephone Practice:

1. Please introduce yourself and tell them you are calling for Father (PASTOR'S NAME) from (NAME OF PARISH) regarding the Diocesan Annual Appeal. Be sure to ask for the specific person named on your card.
2. If they are away, ask for the best time to call back. Some homes may require several callbacks, so don't be discouraged. Do not leave a message; 99% of the time, the call will not be returned.
3. Remember that, in most cases, the parishioners will already know the Diocesan Annual Appeal from previous years. Some people will be pleasantly surprised that they can pledge over the phone, and many will be grateful to the volunteer for calling with a friendly reminder. Tell them, "To reach our parish goal, Father hopes you will consider pledging."
4. If they say they misplaced, lost, or did not receive a pledge card, tell them, "I have a pledge card in front of me. I can handle the details over the phone. Would you like to pledge?"
5. If they seem reluctant, tell them, "The Parish receives all monies over the parish target of \$_____. The rebate will be used for _____." Try to convince the people without pressure to pledge to the Diocesan Annual Appeal. Be mindful that many commercial hard sales go on over the phone and that some people are annoyed at any invasion of their privacy.
6. A husband or wife often says they must speak with their spouse before pledging. Ask when you can call back for their decision. It is essential to set a specific time and date for the follow-up phone call and to be sure to call back at that time.
7. Taking good notes will help you make callbacks. Include in your notes the date of the call, who you spoke to, the date and time to call back, and brief details of the conversation.
8. If the person wants to pledge, say:

**(For those who did not pledge last year) "We ask for an average gift of ____ per family. What amount would you like to pledge?" (Obtain a specific amount.)*

**(For those who pledged last year) "Your pledge last year was \$_____, and we are asking parishioners to increase their pledge by a minimum of 10%. What can I put you down for this year?" (Obtain a specific amount.)*
9. Thank them and say, "You can mail your gift to the Stewardship office, drop it in the collection next Sunday, and the Diocesan Annual Appeal Office will mail you a reminder the next month. Please make the check payable to the Diocese of La Crosse."