



**2017 Annual Catholic Appeal Reference Guide  
for Clergy in the Diocese of Toledo**

*Building His Church,  
Fulfilling His Mission*

As a pastor or pastoral administrator with many responsibilities at the parish, it can be an added stress when trying to ensure a successful Annual Catholic Appeal. This Reference Guide was created to offer assistance and best practices in conducting a successfully implemented Appeal for 2017. The guide was designed to provide pointers in a shortened format, apart from the Handbook which includes detailed information for all parish staff involved in the Appeal.

For the 2017 Annual Catholic Appeal Rev. Joseph Szybka is serving as our clergy chairperson.

The quick reference guide includes the following:

-  Parish Leadership
-  Communication
-  Calendar of Events

For additional questions, guidance or assistance please contact the Catholic Foundation at 419-244-6711.

## Parish Leadership

### *Lead by Example*

- ✚ Lead by example
  - ✚ Share your enthusiasm for the efforts – get excited about it!
  - ✚ Let your parishioners know of your support once you have made your pledge.
- ✚ Provide information on the number of parishioners who supported the Appeal last year.
- ✚ Encourage increased participation by setting a goal for the number of parishioners you hope donate.
- ✚ Ask and appoint parish leadership and volunteers who are committed to the Annual Catholic Appeal and are willing to financially support the efforts.

## Communication

### *Elaborate on the Mission / Share your Enthusiasm*

#### **Explain the Mission**

- ✚ Share the responsibility we have as Catholics to support the larger Church, the Universal Church.
- ✚ If your parish has never had a vocation to the priesthood, stress that you are dependent upon the diocese for priests to serve the parish.
- ✚ Describe how the Annual Catholic Appeal helps the diocese, the parish, and those in need.
  - ✚ “We are very proud of our support to the diocese and our parish.”
  - ✚ “Please be generous to the Annual Catholic Appeal for the benefit of the diocese, and also our parish.”
  - ✚ “The parish has specific needs, the diocese provides many services, and there are always those of our brothers and sisters in need.”
- ✚ Find a way for the parish to connect to the ministries, programs or services that the diocese offers and how they have been used at the parish.
  - ✚ Does your parish make meals for and / or serve meals at Helping Hands of St. Louis?
  - ✚ Has your parish been blessed with a newly ordained priest or has a young man from the parish join the seminary?
  - ✚ Do any of your parishioners benefit from guardian services offered through Catholic Charities for the elderly or those with development disabilities?
  - ✚ Refer to the formation of the deacons at your parish and throughout the diocese.
  - ✚ If you have a parish school, have the religious education courses offered for teachers benefited your school?

## Explain the Mission (cont'd)

- ✝ Remind parishioners of the outreach ministry in Toledo, Sandusky and Mansfield that provides a Crisis Manager for those who seek resources to get back on their feet; remove barriers to becoming self-sufficient again.
- ✝ Stress the new initiatives the Diocese is focusing on: Immigration and Refugee Resettlement, Human Trafficking and the continuation of the Jail and Prison ministry.

## Share the Enthusiasm

- 🕯 Consider using the funds paid over goal for a specific project at your church or school. This will need to be thought out ahead of time and require estimated costs of the project.
- 🕯 To help achieve the parish goal, choose a parish project to address that will gain the parish's popular support.
- 🕯 Designate how the overage will be used. This is always something important to the parish; the benefit from the money.
- 🕯 If the parish has gone over goal in the past, remind everyone how those funds were put to work for the good of the parish.
  - ✝ "The funds paid over goal that our parish receives will be set aside for a specific purpose, or saved for the future."
  - ✝ "The funds paid over goal that our parish receives will be added to our [specify name] endowment."
- 🕯 Ask for a specific amount from each family. Encourage 100% participation. Ask everyone to give their fair share, to consider their true financial ability.
  - ✝ Calculate your average gift, use that as your first ask amount, some will give more, some less and some exactly what you ask for.
  - ✝ It is far better and more important to aim high for an amount that exceeds the parish goal, rather than just trying to achieve the goal.
  - ✝ You can break the amount down per year, per month, per day, etc.

## Financing a Parish Project

- 🕯 If the Annual Catholic Appeal goal is \$45,000 and the parish project is \$25,000 the total goal is \$70,000.
  - ✝ The parish has 500 registered families with 150 financially supporting the parish.
  - ✝ Ask the 150 families to consider a gift of \$47/month for 10 months. Emphasize the fact that not everyone can give this amount, but some will be able to give more.
  - ✝ Encourage those that are able to consider a larger gift amount to please do so.

## Methods of Communication

### *Pulpit Announcements:*

- ✚ Prepare pulpit announcements weeks prior to the Annual Catholic Appeal Kickoff Weekend.
- ✚ Sample pulpit announcements are included in the Handbook that can be revised to accommodate the parish.
- ✚ Prepare and print weekly or bi-weekly notices and updates in the parish bulletin about the parish's Appeal progress.
  - ✚ As a reminder, Appeal progress reports will be generated by the parish this year. You will **not** receive weekly emailed reports from the Catholic Foundation as has been the practice in the past. Your parish administrator, business manager or other designee will be responsible for downloading the reports.

### **Introductory Letter Sample Contents** *(some information may be repeated from other sections within this Handbook):*

- ✚ Describe how the Annual Catholic Appeal helps the diocese and the parish, and those in need. The parish has specific needs, the diocese provides services and there are always those of our brothers and sisters in need.
- ✚ Write an Introductory Letter notifying the parish community of the start of the Annual Catholic Appeal. This could be mailed individually to registered parishioners and included as the Priest article in your weekly bulletin.
- ✚ Be sure to include all correspondence on your social media outlets.
- ✚ Don't forget to utilize an electronic email system you may have in place to get the word out.
- ✚ If the parish has gone over goal during previous Annual Catholic Appeals, remind everyone how those funds have been put to work for the good of the parish.
- ✚ Ask for a specific amount from each family, an average of 2016 giving, some will give more, some less, some exactly what you ask for.
- ✚ You can break the amount down per year, per month, per day.
- ✚ Note how many families participate and what percentage. Encourage 100% participation.
- ✚ Ask everyone to give their fair share.
- ✚ Ask all to come to Mass on kickoff weekend prepared to support the Annual Catholic Appeal.
- ✚ Let them know when you have made your donation.
- ✚ Assure them of your personal gratitude.

## Follow up Letter Sample Contents *(some items repeated from other sections)*:

Prepare a letter from the pastor or administrator, to be sent to the parish families who have not yet made a pledge.

- ✚ Personalize the letter, hand signed by pastor or high quality printed signature in blue ink.
- ✚ Provide a current, but brief update on the progress of your parish goal.
- ✚ Let them know that you have not yet received a pledge from them. Be sure to include a line of apology “if the gift crossed in the mail.”
- ✚ Enclose a pledge envelope, invite them to participate, and remind them of the specific amount you are requesting, as you did in the Introductory Letter.
- ✚ If they are unable to give at the suggested amount, ask them to give at the level they are most comfortable. Your goal is 100% participation and **every dollar makes a difference**.
  - ✚ “No gift is too small or too large.”
  - ✚ “Return the pledge envelope in the collection basket this weekend, or mail to the parish office.”
  - ✚ “We need everyone to respond and even if you cannot give the asked amount, consider something. Please fill out and return your envelope whether donating or not to show we have reached you.”
- ✚ They are supporting their parish for their future and future generations.
- ✚ Be strong, honest and straightforward, and use your personal touches to make a sincere appeal for great participation.
- ✚ If you diligently use telephone follow up, remind them that if you do not hear from them, they will receive a follow up telephone call in the coming weeks. This works, but only if they know, if they do not respond the call is coming.

## Advance Gift Prospect List

Determine your top 10 – 20% of your parishes financial contributors based on offertory collection and Annual Catholic Appeal giving. Consider asking them for a specific, achievable gift based on their yearly offertory gift and any Annual Catholic Appeal giving.

- ✚ If they have never given to the Annual Catholic Appeal they should still be contacted and asked for a gift. This could be the year they begin supporting the Appeal.
- ✚ Personalize a letter with a specific amount.
  - ✚ If you are uncomfortable asking for a specific amount then ask for their “continued support” or to “become involved.”
- ✚ Make a personal phone call, but be upfront that you are calling to talk about the Annual Catholic Appeal, and make sure it is a convenient time to talk. Schedule a callback if you feel hesitation.
- ✚ Setup an appointment for a personal visit to talk about the Appeal.

## **Advance Gift Prospect List (cont'd)**

- ✚ Utilize the resources at the Catholic Foundation!
  - ✚ Assistance in determining the appropriate amount of the ask.
  - ✚ Provide outlines for letters.
  - ✚ Coach / role play prior to an in-home visit.

## **Other Helpful Hints / Tips**

- ✚ Be strong, honest and straightforward, and use your personal touches to make a sincere appeal for great participation.
- ✚ It is far better and more important to shoot high for an amount that exceeds the parish goal, rather than just trying to achieve the goal.
- ✚ Ask those who are unwilling or unable to give, to fill out the pledge card anyway. By doing so, they are providing valuable information to save time and money with unnecessary follow up mailings and phone calls. Be sure to forward these to the Catholic Foundation for recording keeping purposes.
- ✚ Contact the Catholic Foundation for additional information or assistance in preparing for the Annual Catholic Appeal.
- ✚ Watch the Nuntius for bulletin inserts, letter verbiage and helpful hints throughout the Annual Catholic Appeal.

***THANK YOU FOR YOUR EFFORTS TO MAKE THE 2017 ANNUAL CATHOLIC APPEAL A SUCCESS!***

## Calendar

<b>PRE-APPEAL ACTIVITIES</b>	
Jan. 31 - Feb. 15	2017 Annual Catholic Appeal Regional gatherings for Major Donors, Pastors, Parish Staff or Lay Ministers.
Feb. 5 - Apr. 16	Blackout. No parish or ministry donor solicitations, fundraising and capital campaign launches during this time period.
Week of Feb. 6	Parish materials (posters, pledge envelopes) will be shipped to the Parish via UPS. Parishes take inventory of materials received and contact Catholic Foundation with questions or concerns.
<b>PROMOTION/DIRECT MAIL CAMPAIGN</b>	
Feb. 6 - 27	Posters go up in high-visibility, high-traffic areas of parish.
Week of Feb. 13	Direct mailing. Letter goes out to all registered parishioners who have given to the Appeal since 2008. All other parishioners receive a postcard announcement for the Appeal.
<b>ANNOUNCEMENT WEEKEND</b>	
Feb. 18 - 19	Appeal promoted during all Masses. Pastors give motivational talk and announce that household will receive a mailing from Bishop Thomas. First announcement in bulletin and from the pulpit are made about upcoming Annual Catholic Appeal In-Pew weekend. DVD can be played in parishes able to do so.
<b>COMMITMENT WEEKEND</b>	
Feb. 25 - 26	In-Pew Weekend. Pastor promotes the Annual Catholic Appeal by giving a motivational message, using the DVD and demonstrates filling out of pledge envelopes.
<b>FOLLOW-UP ACTIVITIES</b>	
Mar. 13	Second bulletin insert available to parishes via Nuntius.
Mar. 25 - 26	Follow-up In-Pew Weekend. A second appeal is made for contributions to the Annual Catholic Appeal during Mass.
Week of Mar. 27	Follow-up Mailing by the Catholic Foundation to those who have given previously to the Annual Catholic Appeal but not yet to the 2017 Appeal.
Apr. 12	Bulletin insert to parishes "Not too late"
Apr. 16	End of parish / diocesan fundraising blackout.
June 30	Bulletin insert thanking parishioners for the support, stating goal of Appeal and statistics to date for overall appeal and that of the Parish. End of parish phase of campaign.
Dec. 31, 2017	All payments must be in to the Catholic Foundation office to count toward Parish refunds.