

ADVANCING OUR Mission

Parish Leadership Guide



DIOCESE OF
SAN DIEGO

2025 ANNUAL CATHOLIC APPEAL

Good and gracious God, We thank you
for all we are, and all we have.

Everything is a gift from your infinite
generosity.

We marvel how bountiful is your
kindness.

We celebrate the Jubilee Year 2025,
whose theme is "Pilgrims of Hope."

As we explore our responsibility to
be good stewards, Fill us with the
compassion of Jesus, your Son.

Give us eyes to see the needs of
those around us, In the faces of our
neighbors near and far.

Give us hearts that are moved by
the pleas of those who cry out.

On behalf of the children, the refugees,
the sick, and the suffering.

Give us hands that are eager to share
what has been entrusted to us.

For the homeless and those
alone in their homes.

Give us feet to venture wherever
the Spirit leads.

For the mission to bring your
good news to all.

As we resolve to be mindful of the
needs of others, we pray that,
You instill in us your generosity, your
kindness, and your mercy.

Free us from all attachments to
the things of this world.

Keep us focused in our mission of
good stewardship.

Give us the grace to generously
support the Annual Catholic Appeal
so that we may faithfully do the work
of Your Church.

In Jesus' name we pray.

Amen



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**DIOCESE OF
SAN DIEGO**

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

In response to the call of Pope Francis, the recently completed meeting of the Synod of Bishops has urged the Church throughout the world to radiate Christ, bringing the Gospel more penetratingly to our parishes, schools and institutions, as well as transforming the world in which we live.

This is precisely what the programs supported by our Annual Catholic Appeal help us to do within San Diego and Imperial Counties. The Appeal supports the development of parish leadership and catechetical formation, with particular emphasis on the service and formation of the young. In our Catholic schools and formation programs, we bring the saving message of Christ's love and faith to those who will be the leaders of our parishes in the coming generation. We help them to see the world with the eyes of Jesus himself.

In addition, the Appeal supplies the funds for the formation of our new priests and the care for our retired priests. This year, we will ordain three new priests for the service of our Diocese.

The Appeal propels the work of Catholic Charities in helping the poor and the suffering in our midst, with a critical focus on the needs of families and the elderly in our parishes.

I invite you, therefore, to join in this year's Annual Catholic Appeal with a generous contribution in support of the mission that we all share in our synodal journey, the mission to bring the Gospel of Jesus to those around us. When the Lord ascended to the Father, he left the task of sanctifying our Church and our world to all of us, as His disciples. The Appeal is a vital part of that mission, and I profoundly thank all of you who sacrifice to make Christ's presence more vibrant in our midst.

Sincerely yours in Christ,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Robert W. McElroy".

Robert Cardinal McElroy, Bishop of San Diego

PASTORAL CENTER

P. O. Box 85728

San Diego, California 92186-5728

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**ADVANCING OUR
Mission**



As our Holy Father reminds us...

**“There is no limit to
the divine mercy, which
is offered to everyone.”**

Executive Summary

The theme for the 2025 Annual Catholic Appeal is **“Advancing Our Mission.”** This theme is one of compassion, hope, and love. As disciples we are called to trust in Jesus’ mercy, to trust in his patience, to seek refuge always in his love. Jesus invites us to recognize him in the poor, in those who suffer, and those in need. We encounter God’s love when we express mercy and compassion, through stewardship, service, and sacrifice.

The Annual Catholic Appeal supports those who attend Catholic schools, formation of new priests and care for our retired priests, evangelization and accompaniment of young adults, and the consoling presence of Christ for those imprisoned.

Who We Serve

Catholic Schools

Parish-based and diocesan schools are assisted in their staff development, enrollment initiatives and mission advancement efforts as they strive to provide affordable and accessible education to every child and family who desires it, regardless of background, neighborhood, family income or culture.

Faith Formation

The Annual Catholic Appeal provides funding for Evangelization and Catechetical Ministries, Youth and Young Adult, Family Life and Spirituality, Liturgy, Life, Peace and Justice Ministries and the Diocesan Institute. These diocesan ministries coordinate training for Directors of Catechetical Ministries, Young Adult, Youth and Prison Ministry Coordinators, catechists and religious education teachers as well as theological formation for adults.

Catholic Charities

Following the example of Jesus who “came not to be served but to serve”, Catholic Charities is supported by the Annual Catholic Appeal in its effort to promote the dignity of the human person and its commitment to the Judeo-Christian vision of justice and charity. The agency assists almost 300,000 people each year through its expansive network of programs and services.

Clergy Formation and Support

The Annual Catholic Appeal also supports Priestly Formation, the pastoral care of active and retired priests and the preparation and ongoing formation of Permanent Deacons.



**ADVANCING OUR
Mission**

Catholic Schools

\$1,000,000

**Clergy Formation
and Support**

\$1,000,000

Faith Formation

\$1,000,000

Catholic Charities

\$500,000

2025

Goal

ANNUAL CATHOLIC APPEAL

\$3,500,000

Parish Goals

PARISH	GOAL
All Hallows	64,094
Ascension	30,349
Blessed Sacrament	23,156
Christ the King	3,742
Corpus Christi	67,269
Good Shepherd	88,941
Guardian Angels	35,180
Holy Family	10,961
Holy Spirit	15,078
Holy Trinity	30,152
Immaculata	73,140
Immaculate Conception	15,648
Immaculate Heart of Mary, Ramona	25,037
Mary, Star of the Sea, La Jolla	69,640
Mater Dei	29,556
Mission San Antonio de Pala	9,416
Mission San Diego de Alcalá	91,898
Mission San Luis Rey de Francia	80,902
Most Precious Blood	21,411
Nativity	95,155
Our Lady of Angels	7,260
Our Lady of Grace	64,069
Our Lady of Guadalupe, Calexico	14,051
Our Lady of Guadalupe, Chula Vista	12,746
Our Lady of Guadalupe, San Diego	13,003
Our Lady of Light	7,538
Our Lady of Mt. Carmel, San Diego	100,287
Our Lady of Mt. Carmel, San Ysidro	26,196
Our Lady of Perpetual Help, Lakeside	42,376
Our Lady of Refuge	14,793
Our Lady of the Rosary	32,549

PARISH	GOAL
Our Lady of the Sacred Heart	12,213
Our Lady of the Valley	23,144
Our Mother Confidence	70,295
Queen of Angels	23,411
Resurrection	55,886
Sacred Heart, Brawley	19,705
Sacred Heart, Coronado	64,368
Sacred Heart, San Diego	30,213
San Rafael	123,970
Santa Sophia	52,107
Santa Ysabel	2,348
St. Adelaide	1,872
St. Agnes	30,570
St. Anne	29,355
St. Anthony, Imperial	3,451
St. Anthony, National City	8,995
St. Brigid	76,490
St. Catherine Laboure	37,739
St. Charles Borromeo	27,869
St. Charles, Imperial Beach	48,556
St. Columba	22,979
St. Didacus	17,729
St. Elizabeth	6,440
St. Elizabeth Seton	85,231
St. Francis of Assisi	70,546
St. Gabriel	85,285
St. Gregory the Great	119,984
St. James	93,382
St. John of the Cross	44,335
St. John the Evangelist, San Diego	19,688
St. John the Evangelist, Encinitas	84,849
St. Joseph Cathedral	24,177
St. Joseph, Holtville	4,825

PARISH	GOAL
St. Joseph, Westmorland	637
St. Jude	13,278
St. Kateri Tekakwitha	3,348
St. Kieran	22,817
St. Louise de Marillac	9,735
St. Luke	45,104
St. Margaret	37,865
St. Margaret Mary, Brawley	7,552
St. Mark	73,373
St. Martin of Tours	43,462
St. Mary Magdalene, San Diego	43,200
St. Mary Star of the Sea, Oceanside	31,045
St. Mary, Escondido	33,630
St. Mary, National City	24,456
St. Maximilian Kolbe	2,611
St. Michael, Poway	122,425
St. Michael, San Diego	47,463
St. Patrick, Calipatria	1,854
St. Patrick, Carlsbad	105,875
St. Patrick, San Diego	10,519
St. Peter	46,126
St. Pius X, Chula Vista	47,758
St. Pius X, Jamul	16,173
St. Richard	6,435
St. Rita	15,241
St. Rose of Lima	58,809
St. Stephen	35,399
St. Therese	57,583
St. Therese of Carmel	89,145
St. Thomas Indian Mission	4,481
St. Thomas More	54,999
St. Timothy	44,265
St. Vincent de Paul	27,606

ADVANCING OUR
Mission

The Case



Catholic Education

“Welcoming.” “Amazing.” “Successful.”

That’s how some teachers described how they thought the new school year would go.

Those words could very well describe Catholic schools across San Diego and Imperial counties.

From the moment students arrive on campus, the staff welcomes them like family, and lovingly helps them to reach their highest academic and personal potential in a secure environment.

The schools work closely with parents in the total education of the student. Here’s how one parent described the support her daughter received to prepare for the Academic Junior High Decathlon, one of the many enrichment opportunities the schools offer:

“I couldn’t have done it alone. I’m just so grateful for it.”

It’s not just about test results, however, though San Diego Catholic students routinely score above their public and charter school peers.

Catholic schools integrate Catholic values — such as compassion, dignity of the human person and justice — into daily instruction, preparing students to make a difference in their community, church and society.

The students are learning and participating in the Church’s new, synodal approach to serving the community, in light of the Gospel, that welcomes everyone to work together to achieve the common good.



The Case



Ministry for Clergy Formation and Support

We are blessed with a rich heritage of men who have dedicated their lives to the service of our Church. They are a living example of Jesus Christ in our midst, as teachers, fathers, friends, and brothers, having enriched us with their sacrifice and dedication to Our Lord.

The future of our diocese is strengthened by the number of men who answer the call to a priestly vocation and the responsibility, both spiritually and financially, of providing sufficient priests for the diocese belongs to all of us. Thanks to the support of the Annual Catholic Appeal, we are currently supporting 12 seminarians with an average cost of \$45,000 per year.

Our Office for Priestly Formation administers the diocesan program for both pre-seminarian and seminarian candidates, and is located at the St. Francis Center on the University of San Diego campus. As a house of formation, St. Francis Center helps prepare

men in each of the four areas of formation: spiritual, intellectual, community, and apostolic for admission to a seminary school of theology.

Those who are called to priestly service touch all our lives, the lives of our family members, neighbors, friends, and our entire community. Our parishes have benefited from their leadership and guidance. Our communities have been inspired by their presence, demonstrating that living the life of Christ daily is possible.

“There is no greater happiness than being called to the priesthood and to bring His word and mercy to others.”

— Pope Francis

**ADVANCING OUR
Mission**



Care of Retired Priests

When a diocesan priest is ordained, he makes a life-long commitment to serve the needs of the faithful in our diocese, typically serving 40 to 45 years. In return, the diocese makes a commitment to the priest to provide for his basic well-being during his lifetime, including retirement.

Everyone is aware of the need to appropriately provide for the spiritual, material, and medical needs of their senior years. Priests have the same concerns. They want to have a certain level of confidence that someone will attend to the nurturing of their faith, helping them settle in an appropriate physical environment, and assist them when their bodies or minds decline with the passage of time. We play an important part in adding to their sense of security about their senior years.

The normal retirement age for a priest in our diocese is 75. Retirement costs, including insurance, health-care, prescription drugs, skilled nursing care, and housing and food continue to escalate. At present, one-third of our diocesan priests are retired.

Our retired priests have a profound trust in the Lord and His Holy Mother; and they have a profound trust in the gratitude and generosity of the people



of the diocese. Our 52 retired priests rely on the Lord and us to sustain them in their senior years. As age and physical ability permit, they continue to “Hope in the Lord.” They continue to live a life of prayer and sacramental participation. They continue to witness the love of God.

The Annual Catholic Appeal supports care of retired priests so that they can live in dignity, and free of anxiety about their means of support. This includes providing health and auto insurance, nursing care at Nazareth House San Diego if needed, supplementing their pension, and covering expenses for them to attend the annual convocation of priests.



“We are always priests with all our soul and with all our heart. Being an ambassador of Christ ... is a mission that penetrates our entire being.”

— Pope Francis

The Case

Prison Ministry

Supported by the Annual Catholic Appeal, the diocesan Office for Life, Peace and Justice provides pastoral outreach at local prisons, and engages volunteers and parishes in answering Jesus' call to care through its prison ministry program.

Restorative justice promotes healing through facilitated meetings of victims, offenders, and communities of care. There are many components of restorative justice, including Prison Ministry, Victim/Offender Dialogue, reentry practices, victim support, and support for the families of the incarcerated. These are some of the corporal works of mercy. They are ministries of presence, compassion, hope, and love which flow out of our presence — by just being there for them.

We impact the lives of those imprisoned in 25 prisons, jails, and detention facilities, housing over 24,000 inmates. This includes eight sheriff's jails, five juvenile detention facilities, three state prisons, and four federal detention facilities. Many of these inmates are hungry to deepen their relationship with God. We merely become the conduits or channels of the Holy Spirit.

Our diocese supports more than 20 chaplains to say Mass, administer the sacraments, and visit inmates individually. We provide the assistance to almost 200 Catholic volunteers to conduct scripture, prayer, and discussion services. More than 60% of our volunteers have never volunteered for anything else in the Church.

This ministry of compassion and hope is made possible thanks to the support of the Annual Catholic Appeal. This is our special opportunity to transform lives on a person-to-person level.

**“Lord... when did we see you sick or in prison and go to visit you?”
The King will reply, “Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me.”**

Matthew 25:37-40



“God is in everyone’s life. Even if the life of a person has been a disaster, even if it is destroyed by vices, drugs or anything else – God is in this person’s life. You can – you must – try to seek God in every human life.”

— Pope Francis

**ADVANCING OUR
Mission**



Youth and Young Adult Ministry

The Office for Youth and Young Adult Ministry supports parishes in fostering the spiritual, social and intellectual growth of young people of every culture, empowering them to transform the world as disciples of Jesus Christ.

This is accomplished by providing ongoing formation to parish youth and young adult ministers through in-services, workshops, the certificate in Youth Ministry Program, ministry resources, providing consultation and direction for parishes, and by supporting youth and young adult ministry leadership with spiritual and personal development.

The office sponsors San Diego Youth Day for young people to celebrate their faith, an annual Young Adult Retreat, Curso de Verano (Pastoral Juvenil leadership camp), an annual summer leadership camp for high school-aged youth (Camp Emmaus), a Christmas Gala, among many other activities.

The office staff helps parishes and ministries to engage and serve youth and young adults wherever they are in their life: in school, recently graduated from high school or college, new to the area, single, married, or discerning the religious life. The goal is to help them to discover who they are, who God is, and what His plan is for their life.

The Case

Catholic Charities

Catholic Charities is our primary diocesan social service agency. Through it, we assist almost 300,000 people each year by providing a network of important programs and services.



Serving the Most Vulnerable

Catholic Charities meets the emergency needs of the most vulnerable residents, exemplifying the Gospel values of mercy and hospitality, through its services and programs in San Diego and Imperial counties.

The Annual Catholic Appeal supports these efforts, which include offering low-income housing for seniors, and congregate and home-delivered meals, also for seniors; operating shelters for homeless men, women and children; helping to feed hungry

families through its Emergency Food Distribution Network; and providing assistance to immigrants, refugees and those applying for asylum, all legally in the country.

Catholic Charities works tirelessly to develop creative, cost-effective solutions to meet urgent community needs, working in partnership with private and public entities. For instance, the agency partnered with Cathedral Catholic High School to open a food pantry for those facing hunger.

Refugee and Immigrant Services

"This place helps people like me, who have nowhere to go. They offer us a safe place and food. The good people here make us feel human again." That's how one client of Catholic Charities described the help she and her young daughter received at one of its shelters.

Catholic Charities offers services for refugees and their families, legally in the country, to help them to become self-reliant. The agency offers assistance in resettlement, employment, accultura-

tion, case management and health. The clients come from all over the world.

The agency operates respite shelters in San Diego and Imperial counties for immigrants legally in the country who are applying for asylum. Its staff provides them with emergency food and shelter, facilitates a health check and assists them to reach their final destination elsewhere in the country, usually within a day or two of arriving.

ADVANCING OUR
Mission

Senior Residential Services

Rising rents hit low-income individuals hard, particularly seniors on fixed incomes. Those who are unable to pay are forced to move, some onto the streets.

Catholic Charities assists seniors with housing at four low-income residences: Cathedral Plaza, in downtown San Diego; Guadalupe Plaza, in City Heights; St. John's Plaza in Lemon Grove; and Cerro Pueblo, in the Clairemont area.

The organization provides residential services at two other locations, the Escondido Apartments and at St. James Plaza, in Imperial Beach.

At each site, the agency's service coordinators help residents to fill out paperwork, make doctor appointments, and with other tasks. They also coordi-



nate activities to keep residents socially connected, helping seniors to live independently, truly making a difference in their lives.

Services for Homeless

"When we welcome people seeking food and shelter, we see in these men and women the person of Jesus Christ."

That's how Cardinal Robert W. McElroy began his blessing of a day center for homeless men and women Catholic Charities formally opened in May of 2023 in El Centro. The center is a one-of-its-kind facility in Imperial County that provides "wrap-around" services seven days a week, 365 days a year. Homeless individuals can eat there, do laundry, take a shower, or take a respite from extreme temperatures. They can also get referrals to deal with mental health issues, substance-abuse problems, find a job, or to obtain disability benefits.

The center is just one of the ways the organization assists the most vulnerable in our region, be they low-income seniors, hungry families, documented immigrants and homeless individuals.

The agency offers emergency and temporary housing for individuals in precarious housing situations. This includes La Posada de Guadalupe, which provides short- and long-term housing for homeless men and farmworkers; Rachel's Women Center, a drop-in center for unhoused women; Rachel's Night Shelter, which offers emergency



overnight housing for women; Rachel's Promise, a shelter that offers services to help women begin their journey to self-sufficiency; Rachel's Apartments, affordable studio apartments for women in recovery; and House of Rachel/Casa María, which offers an independent living opportunity for unhoused women.

A contribution to the Annual Catholic Appeal helps to sustain all of these efforts. As the homeless population grows, this assistance is needed now more than ever.

Implementation Plan

Quick Reference

Key suggested dates for the Annual Catholic Appeal 2025:

Announcement Weekend — February 8 & 9, 2025

Pastor:

- Prepare Homily on “Advancing Our Mission”
- Inform parishioners to expect a pastor letter on “Advancing Our Mission” Appeal that week (see page 19)
- Display Posters
- Include Prayers of the Faithful
- Publish Bulletin Announcement (see page 16)
- Include Bulletin Inserts (see page 22)

Parish Staff or Lay Committee:

- Display Posters
- Include “Advancing Our Mission” Prayer in General Intercessions (see page 16)
- Publish Bulletin Announcement (see page 16)
- Include Bulletin Inserts (see page 22)

Appeal Weekend — February 15 & 16, 2025

Pastor:

- Prepare Homily on “Advancing Our Mission”
- Conduct Appeal Pledge Response (see page 16)
- Have parishioner give lay witness talk (see page 18)
- Display Posters
- Brochures in pews
- Include Prayers of the Faithful
- Publish Bulletin Announcement (see page 16)
- Include Bulletin Inserts (see page 22)

Parish Staff or Lay Committee:

- Display Posters
- Brochures in pews
- Include “Advancing Our Mission” Prayer in General Intercessions (see page 16)
- Publish Bulletin Announcement (see page 16)
- Include Bulletin Inserts (see page 22)

Follow-Up Weekend — February 22 & 23, 2025

Pastor:

- Mention “Advancing Our Mission” in Homily
- Pulpit Announcement of progress towards parish goal
- Brochures in pews
- Display Posters
- Include Prayers of the Faithful
- Publish Bulletin Announcement (see page 16)
- Include Bulletin Inserts (see page 22)

Parish Staff or Lay Committee:

- Display Posters
- Brochures in pews
- Include “Advancing Our Mission” Prayer in General Intercessions (see page 16)
- Publish Bulletin Announcement (see page 16)
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ADVANCING OUR
Mission



Sample Materials

Posters
[20x14]



Appeal
Brochure

ADVANCING OUR Mission

2025

Goal

ANNUAL CATHOLIC APPEAL

\$3,500,000

Catholic Schools	\$1,000,000
Clergy Formation and Support	\$1,000,000
Faith Formation	\$1,000,000
Catholic Charities	\$500,000

Please make your donation or online pledge TODAY! It's easy...

Online: Just visit sdcatholic.org/giving then select "Annual Catholic Appeal."

Brochure: Fill out the attached form and give to your parish.

Note that the Annual Catholic Appeal qualifies for many company matching gift programs.

Your participation in the Annual Catholic Appeal accomplishes something very simple yet very powerful: It touches people's hearts with God's love through your gift and deepens our collective faith. By contributing to our **Advancing Our Mission** campaign, you are helping our brothers and sisters to truly know and love Jesus Christ. His grace and His mercy.

ADVANCING OUR Mission

2025

Goal

ANNUAL CATHOLIC APPEAL

\$3,500,000

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ADVANCING OUR Mission

2025

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DOWNLOAD MATERIALS

Visit the webpage sdcatholic.org/parish-materials to download materials in English and Spanish.

ADVANCING OUR Mission

2025

Goal

ANNUAL CATHOLIC APPEAL

\$3,500,000

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Parish
Bulletin
Inserts

Implementation Plan

Appeal Pledge Response

Once the homily is over please conduct the “Advancing Our Mission” pledge response:

- Briefly discuss the Annual Catholic Appeal and its benefits to both personal stewardship and the communities in which your parishioners live.
- Ask parishioners to ready their pledge response cards they brought from home (from the letter they received in the mail) (see page 19).
- If they did not bring any from home, please ask them to grab one from the pew.
- Ask parishioners to take a moment to fill it out.
- Fill out your card at the same time — make it very clear that you are making a pledge.
- If parishioners have already given their pledge, or contributed online, ask them to check “online” box or write pledge amount.
- Some parishioners are not able to participate financially; ask that they respond with their prayers indicated on the pledge response card.
- Tell the parishioners that you want 100% participation as a demonstration of the parish’s commitment to stewardship.
- Have ushers pick up the pledge response cards and envelopes and bring them to the altar.
- Bless the pledge response cards, the parishioners who gave them, and the people who will benefit from their stewardship.

“Advancing Our Mission” Prayer for General Intercession:

That, by responding to Christ’s call to “**Advancing Our Mission,**” all Catholics within the Diocese of San Diego will participate in the Annual Catholic Appeal.

Bulletin Announcement:

Brothers and Sisters, _____ Parish is pleased to participate in the 2025 “Advancing Our Mission” Annual Catholic Appeal. This appeal supports charitable needs throughout the Diocese of San Diego. Your gifts make possible the work that impacts so many in our diocese: those who attend Catholic school, formation of new priests and care for our retired priests, evangelization and accompaniment of Young Adults, and the consoling presence of Christ for those imprisoned. Please make your intention to the Annual Catholic Appeal.

You can make your contribution online at sdcatholic.org/giving and select Annual Catholic Appeal, or by picking up a combo brochure/response card here at the parish.



**ADVANCING OUR
Mission**

Advancing Our Mission and the Parish Lay Committee

Summary

Over the years, some parishes have created a committee to conduct the activities related to the Annual Catholic Appeal. Consisting of 3-5 members, these committees are often able to achieve great success while assuming some of the Appeal tasks from the Pastor and parish staff. Ideally, these committees are led by a “champion,” someone who is passionate about the causes supported by the Appeal. The Office of Stewardship recommends formation of a lay committee to assist the pastor with Appeal activities.

Recruitment

Recruiting the committee can be done in a weekend:

- Announcement at Mass
- Bulletin Announcement
- Personal Appointment by the Pastor

Coordination of Activities

The Office for Stewardship has produced this parish leadership guide and will email it to every pastor and key members of his parish staff upon request. We can also email the parish leadership guide directly to Appeal Committee members upon request. Please contact Manny Aguilar at maguilar@sdccatholic.org for details.

The parish leadership guide describes how to conduct the appeal in the parish. It includes activities such as displaying posters and Lay Witness talks. We recommended that the pastor review the guide and determine which tasks he can delegate to his staff and to the lay committee.

Activities

Specifically, the activities that can be conducted by the lay committee include:

- Displaying the posters in high traffic areas of the church
- Coordinating the distribution of in-pew intention forms, brochures and pencils
- Collecting intention envelopes and preparing them to be sent to the Pastoral Center
- Setting up a table/information center about the Appeal
- Preparing for Lay Witness talks

The Lay Witness talk is critical to the success of reaching goal within the parish. Every parish has generous contributors to the Appeal. (The Office for Stewardship can help identify these individuals.) Committee members or prior givers to the Appeal are great candidates for the Lay Witness talk. Once the Lay Witness is identified and accepts the invitation, the committee can train him/her for the talk using the Lay Witness guide on page 18 of the guide.

The table/information center is a concept that has been used to great success at parishes. It is simply a place where parishioners can get brochures and more information about the Appeal. Some parishes have a visual reminder, like a thermometer, that reports on the progress toward the parish goal. Some parishes also put together other visuals such as pictures and the poster to help draw parishioners to the table. The table should be attended by at least one committee member during the Announcement Weekend and Appeal Weekend.

Appendix

Lay Witness Guide

The lay witness is important to successful communication of the Appeal. Awareness of the diocese among parishioners may be low. Lay witnesses can increase that awareness by speak-

ing about why they are contributing to the appeal and why it is important to Stewardship and their walk with Christ.

Sample Lay Witness Talk:

Good (morning/afternoon/evening).

My name is _____. I've been a parishioner here at _____ for ____ years and this is my _____ year assisting/supporting Fr. _____ in our diocesan Annual Catholic Appeal.

I'm helping Father and the parish in the Appeal because it is an opportunity to have an impact on the ministries of our Local Church. Your gifts make possible the work that impacts so many in our diocese: those who attend Catholic school, formation of new priests and care for our retired priests, evangelization and accompaniment of Young Adults, and the consoling presence of Christ for those imprisoned.

So many Catholics within the Diocese of San Diego have demonstrated their support in years past, and on behalf of the poor in our communities, our school children, our retired priests and seminarians, we thank you.

Together, with parishioners throughout the diocese from Oceanside to Imperial Valley, we have come together to accomplish great things for Christ. Our stewardship of our parish and the Diocese of San Diego ensures that both will remain vibrant and faith-filled places for generations to come.

Today, Fr. _____ and I are asking all of you to make an intention to the Annual Catholic Appeal. By so doing, you can make a difference in the lives of those who live in our community and throughout the diocese.

Your entire Appeal donation will support charitable and educational needs, care of retired priests, prison ministry, young adult ministry and training new seminarians for service as priests.

I've made my intention to the Annual Catholic Appeal. Please make your intention today. On behalf of those serving through the Annual Catholic Appeal, I am grateful to you for your ongoing generosity and stewardship. Thank you.

Tips for Lay Witness Talks:

- Be sincere, enthusiastic and friendly (smile a lot)
- Personalize your message in advance. For example, "My uncle is a deacon, my brother is a priest, my children benefit from receiving scholarships to attend Catholic School, etc."
- Tell a story
- Rehearse
- If nervous, share a bit about yourself — "I am Jane and I've been a parishioner of St. Francis for 10 years. The thing I love about this parish is that it is so hospitable."

Be sure to ask!

Ask your fellow parishioners to give generously to the Annual Catholic Appeal.



Sample Pastor Letter

Note: Letter should be on parish stationery, and include a photo of the pastor if possible.

February 2025

Name of parish
Address
City, State, Zip

Dear [parishioner],

Each year we are invited to participate in our Annual Catholic Appeal (ACA), which is an opportunity for all of us to support essential ministries and services that benefit many in our Local Church. The theme of this year's campaign is **"Advancing Our Mission."**

Our Annual Catholic Appeal enables us to fund our Pastoral Center ministry offices and programs that help our community members to live their faith. Your donations contribute to the support of our Catholic schools and programs to support faith formation at all ages, to strengthen families, to promote a culture of life, to care for creation, to engage you and young adults, to sustain our retired clergy and those preparing for the priesthood, and to extend a helping hand to the marginalized.

This year our parish is expected to contribute \$_____ to the Annual Catholic Appeal. I understand the last year has been economically challenging, but I am confident that we can reach this target and possibly exceed it. Any amount we receive over our target will be returned to our parish for our use.

Therefore, I invite you to prayerfully consider your response as a faithful steward of the gifts that God has joyfully bestowed on you. You may use the enclosed Response Card to make your pledge and return it in the weekend collection or the parish office or mail it to the office. You may go to sdcatholic.org/giving and select Annual Catholic Appeal for more information or to make a secure online pledge or donation. You may also make a gift via a stock or IRA donation at sdcatholic.org/giving/stock-donations.

If you cannot donate at this time, we ask you to pray for a successful **2025 Annual Catholic Appeal** for our parish.

Your participation, regardless of the amount, makes a difference. Your generosity brings hope and joy to all those who benefit from your gift. Be assured of my gratitude for your support and of my continuing prayers for you and your loved ones.

Sincerely yours in Christ,

< Pastor's name and signature >

Processing ACA Returns

1. Open response envelopes, and find corresponding bar code label.
2. Affix bar code label (if found) onto pledge card in the area marked "For Parish Use Only (Place ACA Donor Label Here)"
3. If no bar code label is found, please leave area blank.
4. Remove ANY CASH from envelopes. Issue a Parish Check for total cash donations.
5. Batch Pledge Cards by payment type:
 - a. PNP – Pledge No Payment
 - b. PWC – Pledge w/Check
(or Money Order)
 - c. PPC – Pledge w/Parish Check
 - d. PCC – Credit Card
6. For your own records, parishes may wish to record parishioner pledges.

1. Group the pledge cards by payment type (a, b, c, or d), count them and, using a separate Batch Label for each group (form below), give the total amount for each group.
2. For groups b and c, attach a calculator tape that shows the AMOUNT PAID NOW as on the Batch Label.
3. Before sending them in, place the Batch Label on the top of each group of pledge cards, along with donor checks (group b), or parish check (group c).

Place all batches in an envelope and mail them to the Diocesan Pastoral Center:
Annual Catholic Appeal
PO Box 85728
San Diego, CA 92186-5728

DOWNLOAD MATERIALS

Visit the webpage sdcatholic.org/parish-materials to download materials in English and Spanish.

Processing Pledge Payments

- A. Parishioners with a balance due will receive monthly statements along with a payment stub and return envelope beginning in March. The envelopes are preprinted with the address of the Diocesan Pastoral Center. Parishioners should be encouraged to mail their payments to the Pastoral Center in the return envelope they receive.
- B. When a payment on an ACA pledge is sent to the parish without a payment stub, please prepare a Substitute Pledge Payment Form (see form below), which includes the donor's name and ACA account number, if available. **DO NOT PREPARE ANOTHER PLEDGE CARD.**
- C. The Substitute Pledge Payment Form and check should be sent to:
- Annual Catholic Appeal
PO Box 85728
San Diego, CA 92186-5728

Please refer any questions regarding parishioner labels or pledge processing to Mary López at (858) 490-8280, Fax (858) 490-8272.

SUBSTITUTE PLEDGE PAYMENT FORM ANNUAL CATHOLIC APPEAL		Date Submitted: _____
Use ONLY if: 1. Pledge Card has already been filled out and sent in; OR 2. The donation is anonymous		
Parish Name _____	Parish Number _____	
Name: _____	ACA # _____	
Address _____		
City _____	State _____	Zip _____
Phone _____		
<hr style="border: 1px solid #0056b3;"/>		
Payment Type	<input type="checkbox"/> Cash <input type="checkbox"/> Check # _____	Amount _____

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Appendix

Bulletin Inserts



ADVANCING OUR Mission

DIocese of SAN DIEGO
2025 ANNUAL CATHOLIC APPEAL

"Like good stewards of the manifold grace of God, serve one another with whatever gift each of you has received."
— 1 Peter 4:10.



ASSISTANCE FOR SEMINARIANS AND RETIRED PRIESTS

The Annual Catholic Appeal provides essential support for seminarians preparing for the priesthood, helping to fund their formation.

In 2025, three seminarians are to be ordained to the priesthood in our diocese, the culmination of five or six years of preparation.

This year, a total of 12 seminarians are in various stages of priestly formation.

The ACA also offers vital support for retired priests, supplementing their pension when necessary. They have dedicated their lives to serving the People of God at parishes across the diocese and now look to the community to help




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ASSISTANCE FOR CATHOLIC EDUCATION

"Welcoming." "Amazing." "Successful."

That's how some teachers described how they thought the new school year would go.

Those words could very well describe Catholic schools across San Diego and Imperial counties.

From the moment students arrive on campus, the staff welcomes them like family, and lovingly helps them to reach their highest academic and personal potential in a secure environment.



The schools work closely with parents in the total education of the student. Here's how one parent described the support her daughter received to prepare for the Academic Junior High Decathlon, one of the many enrichment opportunities the schools offer:

"I couldn't have done it alone. I'm just so grateful for it."

It's not just about test results, however, though San Diego Catholic students routinely score above their public and charter school peers.

Catholic schools integrate Catholic values — such as compassion, dignity of the human person and justice — into daily instruction, preparing students to make a difference in their community, church and society.



The students are learning and participating in the Church's new, synodal approach to serving the community, in light of the Gospel, that welcomes everyone to work together to achieve the common good.

Our Response as Stewards

REFLECT — On the many gifts you have received from God, including your financial blessings.

PRAY — About how God wants you to use the gifts He has given you.

RESPOND — By supporting the mission. You can give at your parish or online at sdcatholic.org/giving.



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ASSISTANCE FOR FAITH FORMATION

Evangelization is at the core of the Church's mission. The Annual Catholic Appeal supports this mission across the diocese by bringing Jesus's life-giving message of love to all.

Supported by the ACA, the diocesan offices collaborate with parishes, schools, organizations and ministries to enhance their service outreach to form disciples while deepening the faith of its community members.

Diocesan personnel organize in-person and online trainings, workshops, in-services, retreats and conferences. These provide spiritual enrichment and ongoing formation in English, Spanish and Vietnamese.

Three major catechetical conferences were held in the diocese in 2024. In May, two offices teamed up to present a conference focused on how to make stewardship a way of life, in collaboration with the diocesan Hispanic Commission, the diocese presented in August the Spanish-language conference Profetas en Misión. Diocesan directors returned




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ASSISTANCE FOR



"This place helps people like me, who have nowhere to go. They offer us a safe place and food. The good people here make us feel human again." That's how one client of Catholic Charities described the help she and her young daughter received at one of its shelters.

For more than a century, the agency has served the most vulnerable in the San Diego-Imperial Valley region, exemplifying the Gospel values of mercy and hospitality, through its services and programs. These include operating shelters for homeless men, women and children, distributing food for hungry families, and providing vital assistance to immigrants, refugees and those applying for asylum, all legally in the country.

Catholic Charities works tirelessly to develop creative, cost-effective solutions to meet urgent community needs, working in partnership with private and public and organizations.

In 2024, the agency celebrated the re-opening of Cathedral Plaza Apartments after a renovation project that preserved affordable housing for low-income seniors. And it partnered with Cathedral Catholic High School to open a pantry to serve the food-insecure in that area.

Catholic Charities staff recognizes the sacredness of each client, created in the image and likeness of God, as they are called to do.



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ADVANCING OUR Mission

**BATCH LABEL
ANNUAL CATHOLIC APPEAL**
Date Submitted: _____

Number of Envelopes	Parish Name	Parish #	Payment Type	Amount Paid Now

Payment Type Options

- | | |
|-------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| A. PNP..... Pledge No Payment | C. PPC..... Pledge w/Parish Check |
| B. PWC Pledge w/Check | D. PCC..... Pledge w/Credit Card |

**BATCH LABEL
ANNUAL CATHOLIC APPEAL**
Date Submitted: _____

Number of Envelopes	Parish Name	Parish #	Payment Type	Amount Paid Now

Payment Type Options

- | | |
|-------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| A. PNP..... Pledge No Payment | C. PPC..... Pledge w/Parish Check |
| B. PWC Pledge w/Check | D. PCC..... Pledge w/Credit Card |

**BATCH LABEL
ANNUAL CATHOLIC APPEAL**
Date Submitted: _____

Number of Envelopes	Parish Name	Parish #	Payment Type	Amount Paid Now

Payment Type Options

- | | |
|-------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| A. PNP..... Pledge No Payment | C. PPC..... Pledge w/Parish Check |
| B. PWC Pledge w/Check | D. PCC..... Pledge w/Credit Card |

SUBSTITUTE PLEDGE PAYMENT FORM

ANNUAL CATHOLIC APPEAL

Date Submitted: _____

Use ONLY if: 1. Pledge Card has already been filled out and sent in; OR 2. The donation is anonymous

Parish Name _____ Parish Number _____

Name: _____ ACA # _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone _____

Payment Type ☐ Cash ☐ Check # _____ Amount _____

SUBSTITUTE PLEDGE PAYMENT FORM

ANNUAL CATHOLIC APPEAL

Date Submitted: _____

Use ONLY if: 1. Pledge Card has already been filled out and sent in; OR 2. The donation is anonymous

Parish Name _____ Parish Number _____

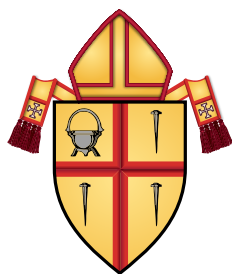
Name: _____ ACA # _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone _____

Payment Type ☐ Cash ☐ Check # _____ Amount _____



DIOCESE OF SAN DIEGO

Cardinal Robert W. McElroy

Bishop of San Diego

Office for Stewardship

3888 Paducah Drive, San Diego, CA 92117

Manny Aguilar, Director

Direct: 858-490-8294 | maguilar@sdcatholic.org

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Grace Perfecto, Administrative Assistant

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SAN DIEGO

2025 ANNUAL CATHOLIC APPEAL