Best Practices

ANNUAL CATHOLIC APPEAL

SOLELY DEDICATED TO THE SOCIAL MISSION OF THE CHURCH
KEYS TO SUCCESS

Follow these proven steps for success in your parish.

- Use the customized worksheet for optional goal-setting - p 2
- Promote how your parish uses the 25% share - p 3
- Build awareness of charities funded by the Appeal - p 4
- Promote the Appeal before and after Appeal Weekend - p 5
- Play the Appeal video at Mass and other gatherings - p 6
- Plan for cultural and language diversity - p 7
- Try additional best practices parishes have shared - p 8
- Share results with parishioners throughout the year - p 9
Setting goals builds community and a plan for success. In February, customized worksheets are sent to every parish populated with information about the past year’s results. Use the worksheet to evaluate how your parish is responding to the Appeal and how you might plan for the current year.

1. Notice your parish total participation and commitments provided for the past year.

2. Record the number of registered households in your parish. Calculate the percent of household participation in the past year.

3. Are you satisfied with participation in the past year? Consider a goal to increase participation by 5% or more.

4. Decide how increased participation will help your parish.

5. Brainstorm your plan. Refer to the pages here in best practices or ask Appeal Coordinators for assistance.

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PROMOTE HOW YOUR PARISH USES
THE 25% SHARE

☐ Invite a recipient or director of your parish ministry to speak at Mass

☐ Publish a letter of thanks from your parish ministry in your bulletin

☐ Invite volunteers from your parish ministry to speak about the impact of the Appeal on the success of their program

☐ Display information about your ministry in visible locations near Appeal posters and pledge envelopes

☐ Display information on your parish website about how your 25% share helps your parish ministry

☐ When posting social media about your parish ministry, remind people that funding comes from the 25% share

REINFORCE OFTEN

Not everyone can be on the frontlines of charity. The Appeal is an opportunity to demonstrate our gratitude to God for the many gifts He has given us, and to bring Christ to others.
BUILD AWARENESS OF CHARITIES FUNDED BY THE APPEAL

See CONTACTS PDF for charity contacts

☐ Host a tour of the charity for pastor, parishioners and parish groups

☐ Invite the director or someone who has benefited from the charity to speak at Mass

☐ Invite a person who volunteers at the charity to share their experience as a volunteer

☐ Ask for a thank you letter from the charity and publish it in the bulletin

☐ Invite a parishioner who is a donor to the charity to speak about why he/she is a donor

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PROMOTE THE APPEAL BEFORE
AND AFTER APPEAL WEEKEND

The Annual Catholic Appeal is a year-round effort and an opportunity to live the Gospel message of our Lord Jesus.

☐ Remind parishioners about what is happening with the ministries you support with your 25% parish share

☐ Rotate posters throughout the year from the options provided with your parish materials

☐ Keep a supply of pledge envelopes in the vestibule for easy access for parishioners who wish to participate

☐ Produce a pop up banner for use in different locations throughout the year (see downloadable artwork for pop up banners)

☐ E-mail parishioners a link to the Appeal video

☐ Provide a link to the Appeal video on the parish website

☐ Post updates on your Appeal progress on your parish website

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PLAY THE VIDEO AT MASS AND OTHER GATHERINGS

Appeal results are significantly higher when the Appeal video is played at Mass on Appeal Weekend and other gatherings year-round.

Three options for playing the video are provided:

1. DVD ROM: Use on a computer (or computer + projector screen)
2. DVD VIDEO: Use on a DVD player + TV/Screen
3. Download Video files: www.scd.org/annual-appeal/parish-materials

A large screen and professional projection equipment will provide the best results in a large church.

Play the video at smaller gatherings:

- Parish Council / Finance Council
- Knights of Columbus
- Parish School / Religious Education Program
- Bible Study or Faith-Sharing Groups
- Youth and Young Adult Groups
- St. Vincent de Paul
PLAN FOR CULTURAL & LANGUAGE DIVERSITY

☐ Include leaders of cultural communities in developing your plan

☐ Show the Spanish video on Appeal weekend at Spanish Masses and at parish gatherings

☐ Encourage other fundraising festivities such as Tamale Sales to contribute to the Appeal

☐ Encourage ALL households to use the Appeal envelope for their donation, even if they wish to remain anonymous, so that everyone can be counted as a participant

☐ Print and display information in other languages and display in visible locations at your parish about the parish 25% share. Place this information near the Annual Catholic Appeal poster and pledge envelopes

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ADDITIONAL BEST PRACTICES

Parishes say these steps add to their success:

- Encourage the pastor to give an inspirational talk about how funds are used in your parish - give examples

- Encourage the pastor to send a follow-up letter or e-mail to parishioners who have not yet participated. Emphasize participation is what matters, not the amount

- Link the Appeal to parish milestones, such as a major anniversary

- Thank donors often. Report back how funds are used, what is happening, how people are helped

- Conduct awareness activities on the weekends prior to Appeal Weekend – Ask parishioners to prayerfully consider a gift; actually ask the Holy Spirit for guidance

- When Appeal envelopes are collected, have your ushers carry extra envelopes, so they can have cash donors place their cash in an envelope before placing their gift in the collection basket

Please share your own best practices with Appeal Coordinators (see contacts).

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SHARE RESULTS WITH YOUR PARISHIONERS

Your pastor receives updated parish results once a quarter from the Annual Catholic Appeal. The Parish Results Report shows total households participating to date and total gifts and pledges recorded to date. The report also projects the total 25% share amount your parish will receive, assuming all parishioners complete their pledges.

We encourage you to let your parishioners know how your parish is doing throughout the year and to ask those who have not yet participated to consider a gift.