

Parish Communication Strategies

You play an important role in your parish's goal achievement and in the overall success of the Catholic Ministries Appeal. Thank you for your dedication and commitment to the Appeal.

In this section, you will find recommendations for promoting the Appeal on a weekly basis in your parish. All promotional materials are available online at <https://catholicfsmn.org/parish-resources>.

These include the following:

1. Timeline
2. Prayers of the faithful
3. Bulletin announcements
4. Mini stories
5. Audio/video clips
6. Follow-up letter

NOTE: It is important to continually reassure Catholics about how their 2022 Appeal gift will be used. Please use the following language from the Appeal pledge card:

All gifts will be used solely for the restricted purposes of the 2022 Catholic Ministries Appeal. The Appeal supports specific ministries and programs of the Diocese of Winona-Rochester.

Catholic Ministries Appeal Timeline

Mid-February-April 1st:

- 1) Speak to your parish council and stewardship committee about the Appeal. Provide an overview of the Appeal-funded ministries, particularly noting the direct effect of such ministries on your parish and communicate the parish goal.
- 2) Go online to <https://catholicfsmn.org/parish-resources> to familiarize yourself with the online stewardship resources available to you.
- 3) When you receive your parish kit via UPS, verify that you have received the following:
 - Goal posters
 - In-pew envelopes (English/Spanish)
 - Additional ministries brochures

- Transmittal form and return envelopes
 - Bulletin inserts (English/Spanish)
 - Prayer Cards
- 4) One week prior to kick-off weekend, you should do the following:
- Display your Appeal posters in prominent places in the parish.
 - Post a link to the <https://catholicismn.org/catholic-ministries-appeal> website on your parish website.
 - If you have a Facebook page, post an Appeal video to your wall.
 - Include a mini story in the February 26-27 bulletin or on the following weekend. These witness testimonials emphasize the Appeal's broad reach and impact.
 - Include a Bulletin Insert in the February 26-27 bulletin.
- 5) Review the *Gift Processing Procedures* so you will know how to handle contributions that may come to your parish office.

February 26-27 – Kick-Off Weekend

- 1) Highlight this year's Appeal theme, *Disciples of Christ, Stewards of His Gifts*.
- 2) Make a brief pulpit announcement about the Appeal.
- 3) Ensure that the parish bulletin contains a mini story about the Appeal, or use the bulletin insert.
- 4) Include an intercession regarding the success of the Appeal in the prayers of the faithful.
- 5) Play an audio/video message from a diocese parishioner on your website or social media. At Mass, share a few words about the importance of the Appeal from you, the presider, or another testimonial speaker. This brief talk should emphasize the impact the Appeal has and motivate those present to financially give to the Appeal. A sample pulpit announcement is online for your consideration.
- 6) Encourage parishioners to peruse their ministries brochure (mailed to every registered/active Catholic in Diocese of Winona-Rochester) and visit the Appeal website, <https://catholicismn.org/catholic-ministries-appeal> to learn more about the Appeal-funded ministries and read/hear compelling testimonials from Catholics throughout southern Minnesota who have renewed faith, extended mercy, and inspired hope by participating in these ministries.

February – April

We recommend incorporating any of the following materials into a weekly action plan for optimal Appeal results. Swapping out messaging and materials from week to week keeps your Appeal promotion fresh

and exciting among your parishioners. Check out the library of materials available to you online at <https://catholicfsmn.org/parish-resources> and design a marketing plan that works best for your parish.

- 1) Mini stories for bulletins – Insert the new witness testimonials (1-2 stories) into your weekly bulletins. These stories emphasize the Appeal’s broad reach and impact.
- 2) Prayers of the faithful – Include intercessions in the prayers of the faithful on weekend Masses.
- 3) Parish newsletter – Include witness testimonials as well as personal notes encouraging generosity from your parish. Direct readers to the Appeal’s website, <https://catholicfsmn.org/parish-resources> to learn more about the Appeal-funded ministries.
- 4) Update reports – Use the financial information provided in your update report available on Giving Trend.
- 5) Communication with staff – Communicate frequently with your parish administrator or business manager. They are often on the front line for fielding questions about the Appeal. Ensure that they are knowledgeable about the Appeal and feel supported in their work. We recommend that open dialogue about the Appeal occur in weekly staff meetings. Share personal stories with your staff about how the parish has benefitted from the Appeal and invite them to share their Appeal-funded ministries experiences with the group as well.

Late May

- 1) If you have met your goal, congratulations! Any gifts that are made beyond your parish goal are rebated back to the parish, pending your parish fulfills rebate requirements. We recommend that the pastor use the parish donor list to send a personal card of thanks or letter to those parishioners who contributed to the Appeal.
- 2) If your parish has not yet reached its goal, we recommend that you organize a follow-up mailing to those names on the parish donor list who have not yet given to the 2022 Appeal. The follow-up mailing should be sent in early May.

Even if your parish has reached its goal at this point, you may still want to plan a follow-up letter to those who did not give, explaining to them your parish project (i.e. the intent of funds collected to be used in the parish). The follow-up mailing should be sent in late June or early July.

Pieces to be included in the mailing are as follows:

- Personalized letter from pastor with pastor’s signature
- Appeal return envelopes (available from Appeal staff upon request)
- Addressed mailing envelopes
- Postage

3) Continue to update your parish on progress to-date by using your update report. We recommend you update parishioners via announcements made at all Masses, in the bulletin, and on your website/social media.

July

1) Send your follow-up mailing in early July. This is an extremely important and critical strategy for parishes that have not yet reached their goals.

2) Contact the Appeal staff if there is anything we can help you with during your follow-up process.

3) We also recommend sending personalized cards of thanks or letters to your parishioners who have contributed to the Appeal. Each donor will receive an acknowledgement letter from the Catholic Foundation of Southern Minnesota, but it is also a nice gesture to receive a card or letter in the mail from the donor's pastor.

4) Continue to update your parish on progress to-date by logging into the CFSM website and checking your parish updates. We recommend you update parishioners via announcements made at all Masses, in the bulletin, and on your website/social media.

August – September

1) If you have not yet met your parish goal, don't lose hope! Continue to promote the Appeal using creative strategies such as

- phone calls,
- home visits to select donors,
- small-group socials,
- personal notes, and
- other ideas you may have.

2) Contact Appeal staff to access additional follow-up resources or to request an update report or donor list at any time.

3) Review the Appeal process with your parish staff, complete the evaluation forms that will be mailed to you, and return it to the Catholic Foundation of Southern Minnesota in the provided return envelope. Your input matters for future Appeal planning *help us to better serve you!*