



**Fifth Sunday in Ordinary Time A  
February 9, 2020**

**Our Annual Catholic Appeal is Next Weekend  
Our Goal is \$387,308.00**

As most of you know, *Our Catholic Appeal* (OCA) is the way the parishes of our nine-county diocese work together to fund the administration and ministries of our diocese. Overseeing any diocese involves:

- ◆ The education and formation of our seminarians, future priests and pastors. Currently, we have 22 seminarians, one of whom is an Ascension parishioner.
- ◆ The ongoing formation and education of priests. Currently, our diocese has at least one priest studying in Rome. When done, he will most likely teach in St. Vincent de Paul Seminary in Boynton Beach, which serves all seven dioceses of our state.
- ◆ An office that oversees the formation of future deacons. Currently, we have two candidates in formation: Phil Warwick and Ralph Turingan.
- ◆ The office of Catholic schools which oversees all our elementary and high schools
- ◆ Family Life Office which, among other things, organizes retreats and seminars for couples preparing for marriage. A part of this office is the Marriage Tribunal which oversees annulments for people in our diocese. (There used to be an annulment fee of around \$450—today, there is no charge.)
- ◆ The Design and Construction Office which oversees all the construction projects going on in our parishes
- ◆ Fingerprinting office
- ◆ Finance office which oversees all the bookkeeping in our parishes and schools
- ◆ Each diocese contributes to the wider church family we belong to. For our diocese, this involves support for the Florida Conference of Catholic Bishops and the National Conference of Bishops.

The above are a few examples of the ways Our Catholic Appeal monies are spent.

**Our share this year \$387,308.00**

Based on size and income, each parish is assessed its share of financial contribution to OCA. This year, our assessed share is \$387,308, which is an 11% increase over last year. This increase is due to two factors:

- ◆ The Diocesan assessment percentage for our parish has gone up 1.25%, bringing our assessment this year to 21%.
- ◆ Our credit for support of Ascension School decreased by \$100,000 (we still gave the school \$250,000.)

**Seven Levels of OCA Giving last year**

If you are new to our parish, you may wonder what levels of giving we have in our parish. The following are seven levels of giving from last year's OCA.

**Corpus Christi Society:** Contributions of **\$10,000** or more to Our Catholic Appeal. Last year, three families gave gifts totaling \$34,000.

**Spes Christi Society (Hope of Christ):** **\$5,000-\$9,999.**  
5 families gave at this level, totaling \$26,000.

**Lumen Christi Society (Light of Christ):** **2,500-\$4,999.**  
23 families gave at this level totaling \$66,475.

35 parishioners gave **\$1,500-\$2,499**, totaling \$62,380.

64 parishioners gave **\$1,000-1,499**, totaling \$71,510.

131 parishioners gave **\$500—\$999**, totaling \$81,779.

275 parishioners gave **\$101-\$499**, totaling \$72,678.

188 parishioners gave **\$99 or less**, totaling \$7,252.

Visitors and unknown donors gave a total of **\$2,100.**

While *all* levels are appreciated, we do need a good number of donations to reach our goal. If you are in a position to join me in being a major donor by giving a gift of \$1,000 or more, please consider doing so. Also, since our assessment is up by 11%, it would be wonderful if

you could also join me in increasing your last year's donation by 10%. If you cannot afford to increase your gift by 10%, perhaps a lesser percentage increase will be possible.

If for some reason you have not been a participant in our annual *Catholic Appeal* even though you could be, I do *appeal to you* to join with the rest of us in supporting our wider church family, *but also*, I *appeal* to you to help your parish to take care of a huge financial responsibility. Last year, only 724 of our 1,300 envelope users contributed to our OCA.

#### **A note to our winter parishioners**

We welcome all our winter parishioners. I know that many of you are registered and play an active part in the parish life, including financially, while you are here—thank you! I realize that most of you have some form of *Catholic Appeal* in your home diocese. If you are here six months, perhaps you can give 50% of what you normally set aside for the funding of our diocese. If you are only here three or four months, perhaps you might consider sharing with us 25% of what you set aside to help our diocese. Each year, we are blessed to have a good number of winter parishioners help us reach our OCA goal.

If you already gave your gift to the diocese, please take an OCA envelope that will be passed through the pews next Sunday and write on it: '*Sent gift to the diocese*' and print your name.

#### **A note to non-registered parishioners**

Officially joining a parish is a personal choice which each person must make. I would like to assume that non-registered parishioners who enjoy the services we provide them are happy to financially support our parish and diocese. If this is not the case—even though you are in a position to do so—then I believe you are failing to 'step up to the plate' and do what any good parishioner should do. A failure to financially support one's parish family is like saying, 'I'll let others, including low fixed-income people, pay my portion.' I would love to think that NO ONE in our parish has that mindset.

**Important:** If you give your pledge and donation directly to the diocese, do let us know so that our parish will receive credit for your gift.

Please be aware that *Legacy Gifts*, *Stock Gifts* and *Matching Gifts* are welcome. You can also use your credit card to give. You can give online by visiting

[www.cfocf.org/OCA](http://www.cfocf.org/OCA) and clicking on 'Give Now.'

A lot of people like the following prayer I wrote some years ago. Here it is for those of you who may not have seen it before.

### ***Morning Prayer***

***Father, Son and Holy Spirit,  
I come into your loving presence  
with gratitude for another day.  
I thank you for the blessings in life  
that I tend to take for granted:  
food, shelter, health, family,  
work and faith in you.***

***May I live this day in a manner  
that pleases you,  
and helps me to become the person  
you created me to be.***

***Help me to recognize  
and respond generously  
to the promptings of the Holy Spirit  
in the events and encounters of this day.***

***May I live this day with the dispositions of  
heart that reflect the values of Jesus—  
love, truth, compassion, mercy,  
justice and kindness.***

***When decisions need to be made,  
help me to choose well.  
When asked to walk the extra mile,  
grant me generosity of heart.***

***Protect me from the false ways  
of the Evil One  
and help me to live in your truth.***

***Expand my capacity for love and joy.  
In all things, may I give you honor and glory.  
Amen.***

***- Fr. Eamon Tobin***

Have a blessed week,

