

2021 Annual Catholic Appeal

Parish Manual



COME, FOLLOW ME...
**and bring hope to
the world**

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2021 Annual Catholic Appeal

Announcement Weekend: Jan. 30–31

Commitment Weekend: Feb. 6–7

Follow Up Weekend: Feb. 13–14

YOUR PARISH APPEAL JOURNEY

Come, follow me ... and bring hope to the world

We follow Jesus as his disciples and as stewards of his gifts. He entrusts us with the mission to bring hope to our wounded world. Today, we face many challenges – devastating illnesses, the destructive effects of prejudice, crushing poverty and damage to our environment.

We face these challenges together and united with hope in Jesus Christ who makes all things new. The Annual Catholic Appeal (ACA) is a pathway for us to share that hope in word and action.

When you participate in the Annual Catholic Appeal, you support the life and mission of the Church and its outreach programs. You elevate our parishes, schools and religious education programs. You promote efforts to eradicate violence, promote respect for life and alleviate suffering around the world. When you give, you are following Jesus and bringing hope to the world.

Please reference this manual as you prepare for your parish ACA journey. With this year's unprecedented circumstances, please tailor your communications and resources to best fit your parish's emotional and spiritual needs.

Thank you for all you do to support the many ministries of the Archdiocese of Chicago. These ministries are made possible because of the support from you and your parishioners. As always, we look forward to working with you in the coming year and are here to help in any way we can.



Archbishop of Chicago

WHAT THE ANNUAL CATHOLIC APPEAL FUNDS

Parish communities

- Parishes and Catholic schools serving financially challenged communities
- Parish rebates to fund the priorities of your local parish

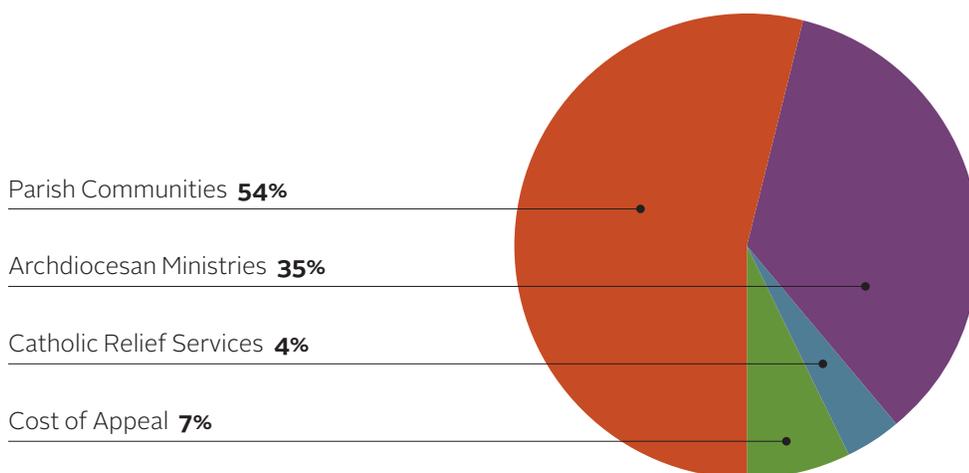
Archdiocesan Ministries

- Evangelization efforts to spread the faith through youth ministries, parish vitality and liturgy enhancement
- Religious education for youth, young adult, campus and adult faith formation
- Continuing education for priests, staff and lay volunteers
- Human dignity and solidarity efforts that promote respect for life at all stages, peace and justice, the needs of immigrants and Kolbe House Prison Ministry

People Around the World

- Catholic Relief Services to assist the poor and vulnerable around the world

How Your Gift Will Be Used



How Your Gift Was Used

2019 Annual Catholic Appeal

\$ 5,316,121	Parish/Local Communities	Support for parishes and schools serving financially challenged communities
\$ 3,954,644	Parish Incentives/ Rebates	Funds raised in excess of individual parish goals are returned to the parish for use with their local ministries
\$ 2,319,455	Parish Vitality and Mission	Programs to support parish vitality—evangelization initiatives, liturgy enhancements
\$ 703,537	Catechetical Faith Formation	Support for youth, young adult, campus and adult religious education ministries
\$ 92,515	Lay Formation	Continuing education for lay volunteers and staff serving parish communities
\$ 502,044	Human Dignity and Solidarity	Activities promoting respect for life at all stages, immigration, Kolbe House prison ministry and Peace and Justice initiatives
\$ 381,716	Priest Education	Continuing education for seminarians and priests ordained for the Archdiocese of Chicago
\$ 545,000	Catholic Relief Services	Assisting the poor and vulnerable overseas
\$ 13,815,033	Ministries Total	
\$ 1,039,841	Cost of Appeal	Design, printing, postage, production, staff and vendors who implement the Annual Catholic Appeal
\$ 14,854,874	Total Appeal	

No money donated to the Annual Catholic Appeal has been or will be used to defray expenses related to misconduct issues.

PARISH PREPARATION

2021 Changes to the Appeal

With guidance from the Archdiocese COVID-19 Task Force, this year's Annual Catholic Appeal is adjusting to reflect the current public-health conditions affecting parish attendance and participation. For instance, the familiar in-pew process, when parishioners normally would receive their pledge forms at Mass, has been replaced with mail-in gift envelopes and brochures available in the back of the church for parishioners to take home after Mass.

As well, because some parishes have been combined under the Renew My Church effort, the ACA campaign can be part of that new unity, giving parishioners the opportunity to support the vitality of their new parish community.

Because the reduced number of attendees at weekly services will affect the number of in-person appeal donations, we strongly encourage you to promote online giving and text-to-give options – see “Giving Options and Resources” section. This gives parishioners a donation option that works best for their needs.

To address the growing need for tools to engage your donors remotely, we have assembled a number of resources and templates that pastors can use to articulate the financial needs of their parish and the archdiocese in a way that is sensitive to current conditions.

Get to Know IZZY!

IZZY is the Archdiocese of Chicago's intranet portal and can be accessed at izzy.archchicago.org or archchicago.org/izzy. It's important to become familiar with IZZY, as the archdiocese is using it to share important documents, files and templates.

IZZY provides you with templates for the 2021 Annual Catholic Appeal, including artwork, brochures, a digital version of this manual and digital files for Cardinal Cupich's homily.

Visit the ACA Website

Templates, materials and the cardinal's homily can also be downloaded from the Annual Catholic Appeal website at giving.archchicago.org/acaparishmaterials. Be sure to bookmark this website for helpful tools to make your annual appeal a success.

Attend an ACA Webinar

To ensure that everyone is receiving the same information, we encourage every member of your ACA leadership team attend the ACA webinar. The 60-minute webinar is a convenient way for parishes to obtain vital information about the 2021 ACA.

Giving Options and Resources

Ways to Make ACA Gifts

One-time gifts, pledges, sustaining recurring gifts, as well as gifts made through stock, Donor Advised Funds and IRA distributions can be made by cash, check or credit card through the following methods:

- Reply form received in the cardinal's mailing in January
- Online at annualcatholicappeal.com
- Text-to-give: Send the word "ACA2021" (not case-sensitive) to the phone number 345345.
- Envelope (pre-addressed) – available in back of churches
- Telephone – Annual Catholic Appeal – 312.534.7959
- Mail to – Annual Catholic Appeal, 835 North Rush Street, Chicago, Illinois 60611-2030

Direct Mail Letters

- Letters from the cardinal will be mailed by the Annual Catholic Appeal and contain a preaddressed return envelope to mail in cash, check or credit-card gifts. Materials included in the mailing will include reference to the Appeal website for online giving.
- Because the letter arrives at home, it usually generates most of the appeal revenue; but please continue to promote the online or text-to-give message options throughout the campaign.

In-pew Envelopes

- In-pew envelopes will be provided along with the annual appeal brochure for parishes to leave on tables near church entrances or exits. Parishioners who attend in-person Mass can then mail in their donation.
- In-pew envelopes are already addressed to the Annual Catholic Appeal Gift Processing Center.

Online Giving Form

- There is a dedicated annual appeal giving form accessible online at annualcatholicappeal.com.
- Pastors are encouraged to share this online giving link in person during homilies, in emails and in social media posts.
- This year's updated online giving form offers various ways to donate:
 - Pledge
 - Donor selects a "Gift Amount" to be charged monthly.
 - Donor selects "Recurring Gift" (a traditional pledge) as gift type and selects a gift duration (the # of months they will be charged the gift amount). Example: to pledge \$100 paid over four months, Gift Amount would be \$25 and Gift Duration would be four months.
 - Donors can make their commitments go even further by becoming a Sustaining Donor.
 - Donor selects a "Gift Amount" and selects "Recurring Gift" as gift type and "Ongoing Monthly" as the gift duration. Donor will be charged the gift amount chosen each month until they decide to stop.
 - Make a One-Time Gift
 - Donor selects a "Gift Amount" and leaves gift type as "One-Time Gift."

Text-to-Give Phone Number

- There is a dedicated phone number for gifts to be made on mobile devices.
- Text-to-Give instructions:
 - Using a mobile device, open your text message application.
 - Enter the phone number 345345 in the To: section.
 - Type the keyword "ACA2021" (not case sensitive) in the message of your text application.
 - Hit the send button.
 - A text reply to your phone will give you a hyperlink to a secure online giving form.
 - Complete your gift by filling out the form and submitting.
 - Gifts will be processed by the Annual Catholic Appeal.

TIMELINE

MARK YOUR CALENDARS

DECEMBER 2020

Dec. 31

- The Annual Catholic Appeal mails the cardinal's letter to previous ACA donors.
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JANUARY 2021

Parish Preparation, Jan. 4–22

- Appeal materials will be delivered to the parishes from January 4 through January 22. Posters, brochures, in-pew envelopes, procedure manuals and cardinal's recorded homilies will be included.

Pre-Announcement Weekends, Jan. 16–17 and Jan. 23–24

- Pastors should begin promoting the ACA by
 - Including an ACA advertisement in your weekly bulletin
 - Preparing altar announcement referencing the bulletin announcement

Announcement Weekend, Jan. 30–31

- Begin sharing ways to give to the ACA by
 - Preparing an electronic bulletin announcement
 - Preparing altar announcement for in-person and virtual services
 - Preparing and delivering pastor's homily
 - Including a prayer of the faithful for the Appeal in all Masses
 - Displaying ACA brochures and giving envelopes in the back of the church for in-person services
 - Sending an email to parishioners
 - Sharing giving link and text-to-give link on social media

FEBRUARY 2021

Commitment Weekend, Feb. 6–7

- Continue to promote the ACA by
 - Preparing an electronic bulletin announcement
 - Including a prayer of the faithful for the Appeal in all Masses
 - Displaying ACA brochures and giving envelopes in the back of the church for in-person services
 - Sending an email to parishioners
 - Sharing giving link and text-to-give link on social media
- Prepare cardinal's video homily and the pastor's remarks for in-person and virtual services
 - Ensure equipment is in working order and cassette, CD or DVD is working

Follow-up Weekend, Feb. 13–14

- Continue promoting ways to give to the ACA by
 - Displaying ACA brochures and giving envelopes in the back of the church for in-person services
 - Including a prayer of the faithful for the Appeal in all Masses
 - Including bulletin announcements
 - Sending an email to parishioners
 - Sharing giving link and text-to-give link on social media

ANNOUNCEMENT WEEKEND, JAN. 30–31

ADVANCE PROMOTION TEMPLATES

The material provided below is also available on the archdiocesan portal [IZZY](#), as well as on [giving.archchicago.org/acaparishmaterials](#).

Prayer of the Faithful for the Appeal

For our parish community, as we prayerfully reflect on our participation in the Annual Catholic Appeal and how we might bring hope to the world through our prayer, service and financial support, let us pray to the Lord.

Bulletin Announcement

Please prepare a bulletin or newsletter announcement, noting that people have received or will be receiving the mailing from Cardinal Cupich. Ask them to share the Gospel message by generously supporting the work of the archdiocese.

Sample Bulletin or Newsletter Message

Please Make Your Gift to the 2021 Annual Catholic Appeal

Come, follow me ... and bring hope to the world

Many families in our parish will be receiving the Annual Catholic Appeal mailing from Cardinal Cupich. On behalf of those served by the ministries, parishes and schools who receive funding from the Appeal, we thank you for your gifts. Please return your response as soon as possible.

The Annual Catholic Appeal offers a wonderful opportunity to answer Jesus' call to "Come, follow me ... and bring hope to the world." This is especially important during these trying and challenging times. Many in our parishes are affected financially by the pandemic, and we encourage giving at all levels to support this initiative.

In addition to providing for ministries and services throughout the archdiocese, the Annual Catholic Appeal funds services in our own parish. For example, Appeal funds support [Insert the name of your parish ministries that receive training or other forms of support from the archdiocese].

When we financially support the work of our parish, our archdiocese and the Catholic Church throughout the world, we experience a feeling of deep gratitude, especially when we contemplate God's many gifts to us personally. By sharing our wealth through gifts to the 2021 Annual Catholic Appeal, we demonstrate our commitment to the Church and each other.

Email Template

To reach all your parishioners, please use the email template below as a guide to ensure that everyone understands all the giving options. Please be sure to personalize it as appropriate for your parish and your parishioners' emotional and spiritual needs.

Dear [Name],

I hope this message finds you and your loved ones healthy and well.

In light of the current coronavirus pandemic, our primary concern is the spiritual and physical health and welfare of the faithful and all those who serve our parishes. We also recognize that we have a duty to care for those among us who are most vulnerable.

These dual concerns reflect everyone's need for safety, while at the same time supporting those who need it most. While the financial circumstances of many families in our parish are uncertain, for those who are able we ask for your support of our Church. The Annual Catholic Appeal will launch next weekend and since our services are limited in the number who gather in person, there is an online giving option at annualcatholicappeal.com and a text-to-give option by texting the word "ACA2021" (not case-sensitive) to the phone number 345345.

While challenging days remain, we also recognize this opportunity to be truly present to one another and care for those who are struggling. May we continue to pray for all those affected by COVID-19, those who are caring for the sick and for each other.

Yours in Christ,

[Pastor Name]

HOMILY RESOURCES

Throughout the January and February campaign rollout, Cardinal Cupich has asked pastors to preach about the Annual Catholic Appeal during the homily. Below, Father Louis J. Cameli has written a suggested five-minute homily presentation that you may use as you see fit.

Come follow me ... and bring hope to the world

When people are in the grip of forces that seem to be beyond their control, they can easily spiral into depression. Many of us know first-hand from our recent experience what it is like to be in the grip of seemingly uncontrollable forces. It could be the corona virus, or the struggle with work and money, or being the object of prejudice and exclusion, or suffering a loss of a loved one accompanied by profound grief. Whatever might be the cause, the result is very much the same—a draining of spirit and hope.

In today's Gospel, Jesus meets a man who has an unclean spirit. We are not quite sure in context what that unclean spirit might have been, perhaps the oppression of the devil, our adversary? Perhaps some form of emotional or mental illness? Perhaps the burden of a consuming addiction? Whatever that unclean spirit was, it held this poor man down and drained him of hope.

Jesus intervened and expelled the unclean spirit. That man was freed. And the Gospel says that all were amazed. They were amazed that Jesus had broken a cycle of despair, that he had infused new hope, that he enabled someone to go forward with life.

As we move through Saint Mark's Gospel this year, we should be aware that it is a Gospel of discipleship. It is meant especially for those who want to follow Jesus. The Gospel teaches us exactly how to follow him. Today's selection tells us to go and meet him and he will free us from what binds us and pour new hope into our hearts. At the same time, that gift of hope for the followers of Jesus is not destined to be their personal possession. Once they know his hope, they must bring it to the world. All disciples of Jesus are also his missionaries in the world. Missionary-disciples bring hope through their words, through their service to others and through their personal witness.

Next week, we will conduct our Commitment Weekend for the Annual Catholic Appeal. This year's theme perfectly mirrors what we have been considering. It is: Come, follow me ... and bring hope to the world. We can take up the mission to bring hope to the world through the Appeal. Our financial support, our prayerful support and our direct involvement in the Church's outreach in parishes, education, religious and ministerial formation, initiatives for justice, peace and respect for life—all these bring hope into our troubled world. There are envelopes and brochures available in the back of the church for you to take on your way out.

Across the next week, reflect, pray and ask yourself question about the meaning of following Jesus and how, in a very specific way, you can bring his hope to the world. Consider what you might contribute from your time, talent and treasure to infuse hope in others. In this way, you will answer that invitation to follow him and share his gift of hope in the world.

The Eucharist we are about to celebrate is the anchor of our hope with its source in the death and resurrection of the Lord. The Eucharist is also our point of departure for returning to the world with our mission to bring hope. Let us praise and thank God for his gifts and ask him to fulfill what he entrusts to us.

COMMITMENT WEEKEND, FEB. 6–7

ADVANCE PROMOTION TEMPLATES

The material provided below is also available on the archdiocesan portal [IZZY](#), as well as on giving.archchicago.org/acaparishmaterials.

Prayer of the Faithful for the Appeal

For all those who support the Annual Catholic Appeal by sharing their time, talent and treasure, as they hear the call to follow Jesus and bring hope to the world and for all those who benefit from the Appeal, let us pray to the Lord.

Bulletin Announcement

Pastors are asked to preach about the Annual Catholic Appeal at each Mass. Below is an example of a bulletin or newsletter announcement you may use that asks people to review the brochures available for pick up and consider making to make an Annual Catholic Appeal pledge.

Sample Bulletin or Newsletter Message

2021 Annual Catholic Appeal

Come, follow me ... and bring hope to the world

I invite you to spend some time this week reflecting on the Annual Catholic Appeal materials you should have received in your bulletin or in the mail. The Annual Catholic Appeal is much different than a one-time special collection: It is a pledged commitment to make a gift over time. Your pledge can be made payable in installments.

Each pledge makes a difference because all parishes participate in the campaign and the gifts of many enable our archdiocese to deliver needed ministries and services to answer the call of Jesus to “Come, follow me ... and bring hope to the world.”

If you received your pledge form in the mail, please complete it and mail it back. This year, we also encourage our parishioners to make their Annual Catholic Appeal gifts online or via text message: annualcatholicappeal.com or text the word “ACA2021” (not case-sensitive) to the phone number 345345.

Email

To reach all your parishioners, please use the email template below as a guide to ensure that everyone understands all the giving options. Please be sure to personalize it as appropriate for your parish and your parishioners' emotional and spiritual needs.

Dear [Name],

Sacred Scripture teaches us “if we love one another, God remains in us and his love is brought to perfection in us” (cf. 1 John 4:12).

Supporting the Annual Catholic Appeal unites us as a faith community in demonstrating love of neighbor through the good works we are able to provide together. The Appeal drives the holy mission of our archdiocese to teach, to serve and to sanctify, allowing us to carry out the work of Christ. I hope, as a parish, we can join together during this time of uncertainty to continue to carry out these works.

If you would like to sign up for monthly parish giving, you can do so at annualcatholicappeal.com, or if you would like to make a gift via the text-to-give option, please text the word “ACA2021” (not case-sensitive) to the phone number 345345 to access the secure giving website.

Please know of my deepest gratitude for your participation!

Yours in Christ,

[Pastor Name]

HOMILY RESOURCES

The cardinal's homily is played only on Commitment Weekend (Feb. 6 – 7). In preparation, pastors should listen to the cardinal's homily to become familiar with the message and assure that the broadcast equipment and recordings are working properly. Below, please find the script of the cardinal's homily and talking points for the pastor's introduction of the recording after the Gospel reading.

Sample Pastor Introduction to the Cardinal's Taped Homily

At the end of the reading of the Gospel (remember: the short form of Gospel) and before the cardinal's taped homily begins, the pastor can make a very brief introduction in these or similar words, as suggested by Father Louis J. Cameli:

“Today is the Commitment Sunday for the 2021 Annual Catholic Appeal. Cardinal Cupich will now speak to us about the readings that we have just now heard proclaimed and the theme for this year's Appeal: Come, follow me ... and bring hope to the world. Please give him your attention. After his reflection, I will help you to pledge your support for the Appeal. Thank you. [Play video/audio]”

Immediately after the cardinal's homily the pastor should explain the Annual Catholic Appeal theme and impact, incorporating the Gospel message and an understanding of community. Please thank all those who make a pledge, as well as any volunteers.

Cardinal's Homily – Commitment Weekend, Feb. 6–7

The words of Job find a place in our own hearts in these days: “Is not man's life on earth a drudgery? ... My days are swifter than a weaver's shuttle; they come to an end without hope ... I shall not see happiness again.” This past year has worn many of us down with the pandemic, economic uncertainties, and social unrest. Hope seems very thin. Still, that painful experience—for us as people of faith—isn't the whole story. It must be completed by the gospel that we just now heard.

There, Jesus heals bodies and spirits. He raises up Peter's mother-in-law and others who are physically ill. He casts out oppressive demons. But, to all who are afflicted, he also brings hope.

Hope, as much as air or water or food, enables us to live and to go forward. Hope cannot simply be wishful thinking. And it cannot amount to hope in ourselves or our own resources. The only hope that will truly sustain is the hope that God gives us in Jesus Christ by the power of the Holy Spirit. As Saint Paul tells us, the gift of hope is already ours for Jesus Christ dwelling in us, is our hope of glory (Col. 1:27).

Recently, Pope Francis, addressed an encyclical letter to the entire world, *On Fraternity and Social Friendship*. The Holy Father describes the many daunting challenges that face humanity in this moment, but also offers a path forward that renews our most fundamental relationships and our life together. He presses forward because hope leads him. He writes: “I invite everyone to renewed hope, for hope ‘speaks to us of something deeply rooted in every human heart ... and it can open us up to grand ideals that make life more beautiful and worthwhile.’” (FT, n. 55; Greeting to Young People at the Padre Felix Varela Cultural Center, Havana, 2015)

We need to reclaim the gift of hope that is ours in Jesus in this moment. Otherwise, we can fall into spirals of desperation. But we also need to embrace our responsibility for bringing the hope of Jesus to the world, for hope is a gift to be shared.

The theme for this year's Annual Catholic Appeal captures this calling to be Jesus' missionary disciples: Come, follow me ... and bring hope to the world. But how do we do this? How do we firm up our hope and bring it to others?

Certainly, this happens when we pray, both personally and as a community, when we lift up our wounded and needy world to the Lord. It happens through the daily witness of our lives, especially in our families and places of work. It happens through the small acts of kindness and compassion that we extend to others. Finally, it happens through our participation in the Annual Catholic Appeal, as we join together in solidarity and bring his hope to the world.

Your support of the Appeal is more important than ever. Through it you give hope to so many, to the parish and school communities financially impacted by the virus, to the ministries in the archdiocese that care for vulnerable individuals during this global crisis and to Catholic Relief Services, which reaches out to the world.

Jesus says to each of us: Come, follow me ... and bring hope to the world. As your financial circumstances permit, please join me and other Catholics in making a gift to the Annual Catholic Appeal of the archdiocese. You have my promise that the archdiocese will be respectful of your sacrifice and a good steward of your gift. And once your parish meets its goal, proceeds return to the parish to support its mission in your local community.

Listen now to your pastor's instructions. Because of restrictions imposed by the virus, he will help you to make your pledge on your phone. Then, celebrate the Eucharist with hearts uplifted and grateful for the hope that God has poured into them.

*A digital version of the cardinal's homily, along with a recording of the Gospel, will be available online at giving.archchicago.org/acaparishmaterials or on **IZZY** with the ACA resources. You will also receive a copy of the homily on a recorded item (DVD, CD, cassette) in early to mid January with the other deliveries.

Cardinal's Homily Follow-up Speaking Notes

- Thank past contributors to the Appeal; remind them of how they have impacted lives.
- Remind families of the call to support the gifts of the Church, which includes your parish, all the Catholic communities of Cook and Lake counties and those around the world. Their gift only goes to support parishes, schools and ministries, with a small percentage that goes to costs.
- Remind families that gifts can be made via the giving envelopes available for pick up in the back; online at annualcatholicappeal.com, or via text message at the phone number 345345.

Suggested Presentation Script to Be Used by Pastors Feb. 6–7

“Good morning. As you heard from Cardinal Cupich, today we are conducting the annual campaign that asks all parishioners to make a financial commitment to the Archdiocese of Chicago’s Annual Catholic Appeal.”

“As your pastor, I want to thank all of you who have given to this campaign in past years. I can assure you that the funds you gave are deeply appreciated by the parishes, schools and people served by the archdiocese.”

“Each of us is called to share his or her gifts in support of the Church. We must first support our parish and then our archdiocese and the Church throughout the world. The Annual Catholic Appeal of the Archdiocese of Chicago is a very effective way to support ministry outside of our parish boundaries, as well as to support the services that the archdiocese provides to our parish.”

“This year’s appeal is slightly different because we are not collecting in-pew pledge forms. Rather, you will have the option to pick up a mail-in giving envelope located [indicate where in the back of the church where the envelopes are available] and you may take one on your way out of Mass today.”

“We highly encourage you to consider making your gift online this year. It only takes a few simple steps and is secure. You can visit the website “annualcatholicappeal.com” to make your pledge online. I will also share this link in my [email/newsletter] to the full parish for ease of access.”

“Another option that is new this year is a text-to-give option. Many of us have smartphones and this is a quick way to open up the secure giving form online to make a gift.”

[Pause if parishioners wish to take out their phones to enter the text number]

“If you would like, you may text “ACA2021” (not case-sensitive) to the number 345345. You will then receive a response in your text messages. It would read something like “Thank you for your support! Please click the link to donate.” The text-to-give form will allow for one-time or monthly/recurring giving.”

“On behalf of Cardinal Cupich, all those who benefit from the good work of the Annual Catholic Appeal and myself, I thank you for your contribution. May God bless you.”

FOLLOW-UP WEEKEND, FEB. 13-14

ADVANCE PROMOTION TEMPLATES

The material provided below is also available on [IZZY](#), the archdiocesan portal as well as on [giving.archchicago.org/acaparishmaterials](#).

Prayer of the Faithful for the Appeal

For the success of the Annual Catholic Appeal that we may all be renewed in our following of Jesus and willingness to bring hope to the world through sharing our resources with others, let us pray to the Lord.

Bulletin Announcements

Pastors are asked to preach about the Annual Catholic Appeal at each Mass. Please share a bulletin or newsletter announcement asking people to review the brochures available for pick up and be prepared to make an Annual Catholic Appeal pledge. An example is given below.

Sample Bulletin or Newsletter Message

2021 Annual Catholic Appeal

Come, follow me ... and bring hope to the world

Our parish is conducting our campaign for the Annual Catholic Appeal. Please remember that the Annual Catholic Appeal is much different than a one-time special collection. It is a pledge campaign where you can make a gift payable in installments.

The Annual Catholic Appeal theme, "Come, follow me ... and bring hope to the world," was selected because as disciples of Jesus, we follow the Master who both gives us hope and sends us to bring his hope to our world that needs it so much.

Each pledge makes a difference! All parishes communities participate in the campaign and the gifts of many enable our parishes, schools and ministries to deliver needed services. Thank you for your prayerful consideration and generous response.

To make your gift, you can complete the mail-in giving envelope available at church or make a gift online at [annualcatholicappeal.com](#) or text "ACA2021" (not case-sensitive) to the phone number 345345.

Email

To reach all your parishioners, please use the email template below as a guide to ensure that everyone understands all the giving options. Please be sure to personalize it as appropriate for your parish and your parishioners' emotional and spiritual needs.

Dear [Name],

Now more than ever, the Church needs your steadfast support. Your participation in our parish's weekly offertory and in the Annual Catholic Appeal is essential to maintaining the financial well-being of the Church over the next few weeks and months.

Although we are not able to gather in-person as a whole parish during this time, please consider signing up for online giving to the parish offertory and to the Appeal. Just as we rely on your spiritual support, the Church continues to rely on your financial support to continue its work of sanctification and evangelization.

If you would like to sign up for monthly parish giving, you can do so at annualcatholicappeal.com or if you would like to make a gift via text message, please text "ACA2021" (not case-sensitive) to the phone number 345345.

Please know of my deepest gratitude for your participation!

Yours in Christ,

[Pastor Name]

HOMILY RESOURCES

Suggestion for Homily Notes for Preachers from Father Louis J. Cameli

As a follow-up to last week's Commitment Weekend for the Annual Catholic Appeal, pastors or their representatives who are preaching should invite those who were unable to make a pledge the previous weekend to do so at this Mass. If this additional step is taken, then the homily for the day can be shortened. Some possible talking points include:

- Jesus heals bodies. And even more, he heals spirits. The scourge of leprosy left people physically disfigured, socially isolated and without hope. When Jesus cleanses the leper in today's Gospel, he effects a physical transformation for the man, helps him rejoin family and human society and infuses him with new hope.
- When we meet Jesus and ask him, he does the same for us. For us today—with all the troubling circumstances of our lives—his healing hope may be the most precious part of our restoration.
- Notice what happened to the man cured of leprosy. His joy and his hope impel him to go and share the good news of his encounter with Jesus, despite Jesus' warning. His hope is irrepressible and contagious.

- When we have known the new hope that only Jesus can give us, we cannot hold it as a personal possession. We are called to be ambassadors of hope, to bring hope to the world. We cannot stay quiet about it.
- This year, as we observe the Annual Catholic Appeal, we hear a deep and stirring invitation that the Lord gives us: Come, follow me ... and bring hope to the world.
- Our support of the Appeal, our sharing of time, talent and treasure, is an important way we can respond to his call and be his disciples who bring hope to the world.
- The Eucharist we celebrate enables us to encounter the Lord, hear his call to follow him and to be sent in mission to a world so much in need of hope.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Each of us plays an important role in ensuring a successful parish campaign. Because each parish is different, these roles and responsibilities provide guidelines on how to distribute tasks. It is strongly suggested that pastors and their parish administrators attend a webinar about the Annual Catholic Appeal to provide more information on these responsibilities.

Pastor

- There is no more important role or significant factor in the success of the Annual Catholic Appeal than the support and participation of the pastor. The pastor provides leadership by publicly endorsing the Appeal and ensuring that the parish plan and schedule are followed.
- Pastors also customize their homilies and other communication pieces to accommodate their unique parish audience.
- Listen to the cardinal's homily beforehand and test audio/visual equipment.

Parish Administration

- Test audio/visual equipment for the cardinal's homily
- Collect and mail any in-pew envelopes left behind or dropped off by parishioners. These will be preaddressed to the Annual Catholic Appeal Gift Processing Center.

PARISH GOALS AND REBATE STRUCTURE

- Parish goals are calculated as a percentage of annual Offertory Income (Sundays, Holy Days Christmas and Easter collections).
- Parishes with less than \$40,000 in average household income per census data carry a goal of four percent of Offertory Income.
- The remaining parishes carry a goal of seven percent of Offertory Income.
- The first rebate check will be mailed to parishes at the end of October 2021. The final rebate check will be mailed to the parishes at the start of March 2022.
- To improve the equitable sharing of the costs of running the appeal, 10 percent of all rebate proceeds greater than \$10,000 will support the costs of running the Annual Catholic Appeal. This will be a more equitable way to share costs to make sure that parishes support Appeal costs more in line with the degree to which they benefit from the Appeal.

GIFT PROCESSING, FAQs AND CONTACTS

Gift Processing

Due to reduced attendance at live Masses in the churches, this year's appeal strongly encourages online and mail-in giving.

All online gifts will be processed by the Annual Catholic Appeal. Any gifts mailed in the giving envelopes will be processed by Letter Concepts, Inc., our gift processing vendor.

Any ACA gifts received in the parish should be forwarded to our gift processing center.

UPS or FedEx packages
(recommended shipping method) to:

Letter Concepts, Inc.
33 Massirio Drive
Kensington, CT 06037
Attn: AOC Processing Manager, Carolyn Drew

USPS packages to:

Archdiocese of Chicago
Annual Catholic Appeal
PO Box 7256
Kensington, CT 06037-7256

Frequently Asked Questions

Q: What if we haven't met our parish goal?

A: If you haven't yet met your goal, the Parish Support Team in the Office of Stewardship and Development is available to help parishes by sharing appeal best practices. If you think your parish would benefit from this assistance, please contact your vicariate parish support team member. Their information can be found in the "Contact Us" section below or at giving.archchicago.org/contact-us/about-us.

Q: What happens when a parish exceeds its goal?

A: Payments in excess of a parish goal, less any campaign fees as described above, will be returned to the parish as a rebate. Parishes pay no archdiocesan assessment on Annual Catholic Appeal rebates.

Q: When does the 2021 ACA officially end?

A: Technically, ACA activities occur throughout the entire calendar year, so parishioners can make a gift to the ACA until January 30, 2022.

Q: Who do I contact if I need help?

A: For any questions or more information, please see the contact information below.

Contact Us

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