

Strategies for a Successful Bishop's Appeal



Catholic Foundation
for the Diocese of Green Bay

www.catholicfoundationgb.org

920-272-8197

BishopsAppeal@gbdioc.org

Putting the Pieces in Place



For a successful campaign, the Pastor needs some help and there needs to be a focused approach to increase Crozier Society members and new donors. To begin to accomplish this, you should:

- *Recruit two or three parish leaders to help in the preparation and promotion of the Appeal.*
- *Some parishes have used Finance Council members, Parish Council members or Crozier Society members.*

Pre- Campaign Letters

Prior to the kickoff of the Bishop's Appeal, we suggest that you send out the following letters. These letters have achieved great results. The intent of the letter is to thank people, inform them of the upcoming campaign and ask them to consider giving or giving a little more. The timing of the letters work best when they arrive in the homes the week before the campaign begins. We would suggest to segment letters to the following groups.

(all sample letters can be found at www.catholicfoundationgb.org)

- Crozier Society members (\$500 or more)
- Donors \$250-\$499
- Donors \$1-\$249
- Non-donors who support the parish through offertory



Sample Letter

Letter to those who had contributed \$500 or more...

After a snowy December and a cold January, most of us are hoping for an early spring. And with spring comes new life.

The life of our parish here at <<Parish Name>> is directly related to our local Church, the Diocese of Green Bay. We are one of 157 parishes and over the years have received many services from our diocesan staff, services in the area of education, counseling, administrative assistance and so much more.

Annually, we are asked to participate in the Bishop's Appeal that offers financial assistance so the mission of the diocese might be accomplished. In 2015, your contribution to the Bishop's Appeal was most generous, and I thank you personally. Individuals such as you who gave \$500.00 or more helped us to reach our goal for the Appeal. Our current goal for the 2016 Appeal is \$_____

If you have already participated in this year's Appeal, thank you. If not, I would ask for your support with a donation of \$500.00 or more. I realize that we are in difficult economic times, yet many of the people who are served by the Appeal are experiencing traumatic circumstances, and the help given by our diocesan staff is a true blessing.

God bless you for your support of the Bishop's Appeal. I am proud that you are a member, along with me, of the Bishop's Appeal Crozier Society.

Special thanks to Bishop Robert Morneau and Resurrection Parish for sharing these sample letters.

Promoting of Appeal

For most parishes to have a successful Appeal it requires 4-6 weekends of active promotion of the campaign at weekend Masses.

- Roughly 30% of Catholics attend Mass weekly in the Diocese of Green Bay. To come close to reaching each Catholic family at Mass the Appeal would need a minimum of four weeks promotion.
- The next several slides will share with you a suggested approach for promoting the Appeal.



Promoting of Appeal

– Two weeks before the campaign kick-off

- Display posters and informational materials in the Church.
- Begin using bulletin articles about the Appeal.
- Request data from the Catholic Foundation for pre-campaign letter segments. The Foundation will provide you with a spreadsheet for a word merge that contains the specific segments you need.

– One week before the campaign kick-off

- Prepare, print and mail the pre-campaign letter from the priest or parish director.



Promoting of Appeal

– Week One: Kick-off weekend

- Father announces the Bishop's Appeal and preaches a homily on the impact the Appeal makes on the parish and parishioners.
- If Father is not able to preach a homily on the Bishop's Appeal, then the parish should use Bishop Ricken's Audio Homily.
- During Father's homily or after Bishop Ricken's homily, Father should talk about giving a gift and ask for people to join him in giving.
 - Sample Ask: I would like to invite you to pray about what God is calling you to give to help support the Church through the Bishop's Appeal. Now I know God blesses each of us differently and some of us may be able to give a gift of \$25 or \$50 and that might be a bit of a sacrifice. I also know that some of us may be able to give \$100, or \$250 to the Appeal and still others might be able to give \$500 or more to the Appeal and become a member of the Crozier Society. Please know that whatever you are able to give – I am grateful to you! Thank you in advance for responding generously to Bishop Ricken's letter about the ministries of the larger Church that help enhance our parish ministries.

Promoting of Appeal

- Week One: Kick-off weekend (continued)
 - Include a Bishop's Appeal insert in the bulletin.
 - Bishop Ricken's letter arrives in homes on Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday inviting people to give to the Appeal.
- Week Two
 - At all Masses, show the Bishop's Appeal video. The message focuses on benefits of the Bishop's Appeal, how the money is used, and how the Appeal positively impacts our parish.
 - In the announcements after Mass Father should share some additional thoughts on the impact of the Appeal.
 - Ask the children to make barometers that chart our progress in meeting our goals. Display these visuals at all entrances.

Promoting of Appeal

– Week Three



- Father should mention the Appeal progress being made toward their goal.
- Consider having a Witness Talk with a special speaker during Mass. See the new Witness Talk Resource Guide for ideas on who might make a good speaker, and an outline for their talk. The Guide can be found on the CD of Campaign Materials.
- Another option: Before Mass ends, a parish council member addresses the parish and reads prepared text introducing the value and benefits of the Crozier Society. Their message should include that currently the parish has “x” Crozier Society members and our goal is to increase the number of members to “x”.

Promoting of Appeal

– Week Four

- For the second consecutive Sunday, a Witness Talk is presented by someone in the Parish (Parish or Finance Council members, catechists, lay ministers and deacons are great examples). Use the new Witness Talk Resource Guide, found on the CD of Campaign Materials, to develop the presentation.
- Include a bulletin insert that explains how important the success of the Bishop's Appeal is to our parish.
- Update the barometer showing our increasing contributions.
- Mid-March the Catholic Foundation sends a second letter to all parishioners.



Promoting of Appeal

– Week Five

- Father shares an update on the progress of the Appeal.
- Continue with the weekly bulletin articles.

– Week Six

- Parish leader shares an update on the progress of the Appeal.
- Continue with the weekly bulletin articles.

– When Goal is Reached

- Father shares the wonderful news and thanks all parishioners.
- The parish can also publish Bishop Ricken's thank you letter to the parish in the bulletin.

Promoting of Appeal

– In April

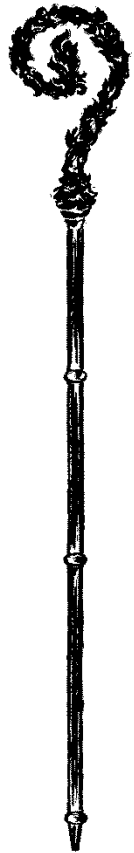
- The Catholic Foundation sends a third letter to parishioners who have given in the past but have not given this year.

– In May

- The parish has an opportunity to send a letter to all parishioners who have not given yet to the Appeal.

Additional Strategies

– Crozier Recruitment/Gratitude Events



- Several parishes have started to host events for Crozier Society members to thank them and encourage others to join the Society. Some parishes have established their own giving societies. The Catholic Foundation is willing to help you in the preparations of these events. Josh Diedrich is also willing to attend and give a short presentation thanking them and sharing the good work.

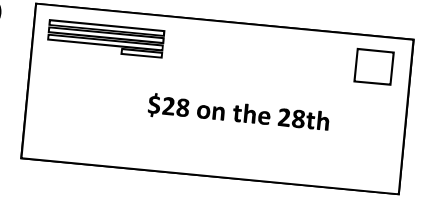
Additional Strategies



The \$28 on the 28th strategy has worked well to close the gap between the amount raised and the goal. In many cases it pushes parishes over the top.

This unique idea was created by St. Mary Magdalene Parish, Waupaca to try to close the gap between what had been raised and their goal. The first thing they did was figure out that if each parishioner could give \$28 on the 28th of the month, their parish would reach their goal. Even though they did not get a gift from everyone, they were able to come much closer to reaching their goal.

Additional Strategies



– \$28 on the 28th (Continued)

- 1st step: Print collection envelopes that say, "\$28 on the 28th" (or whatever date you choose to run your campaign.) The envelope should also contain the parish name, city and a spot for the parishioners to fill in their name, address and other contact information. Make sure the envelope also says Bishop's Appeal on it so they know that is where their gift will be used.
- Promote the campaign. Take three weekends and ask members to consider giving \$28 on the weekend of the 28th to help the parish reach their Bishop's Appeal goal. This should be promoted in the bulletin and at each Mass in announcements.
- The weekend of the 28th, please promote that the parish is getting close to the Bishop's Appeal goal and ask people to consider giving \$28 in the collection envelopes to help the parish. Please share with parishioners the benefits the parish sees from the Bishop's Appeal.
- After the collection, please send all envelopes to the Catholic Foundation so we can enter the gifts and send thank you letters to those who have given. (The Catholic Foundation must receive all envelopes by Sept. 18, 2015 so we can apply these gifts toward your parish's goal before refunds and invoices are sent out.)