

How to Give a Powerful Witness Talk for the Bishop's Appeal

Your voice matters. When you speak from the heart, you help others see the real, living impact of the Bishop's Appeal—not just as a campaign, but as a mission of love, mercy, and hope. Your story can inspire someone to serve, to build a deeper relationship with Jesus, and to give.

As a speaker prepares their witness talk, the following are a few items to include:

Your Role as a Witness Speaker

You are not just giving a talk. You are giving a testimony. You are the face of the Appeal in your parish. Whether you're a catechist, a parish council member, a deacon, a finance council member, someone who has received help from Catholic Charities, or someone whose life has been touched by other diocesan ministries, your story brings the Appeal to life.

Before You Begin: Reflect Deeply

Ask yourself:

- Which diocesan ministries or training funded by the Bishop's Appeal has made a difference in my life?
- How has it strengthened my parish?
- Who in my community has been helped because of it?
- Why do I choose to give, and why do I believe others should too?

Let your answers guide your message.

Suggested Structure for Your Talk

1. Warm Introduction

Start with a heartfelt greeting:

“Good morning. My name is <Speaker Name>, and I've been a member of <Parish Name> for <Number of Years at Parish> years. Today, I want to share with you how the Bishop's Appeal has touched my life—and why I believe it's a powerful way we can live out our faith together.”

2. Share Your Story

Speak personally and authentically. Examples include, but are not limited to:

- “As a catechist, I've received training and resources through the Diocese that help me share the Gospel with our children.”
- “Through Catholic Charities, I've seen families find hope in the midst of crisis because of your generosity.”

- “I attended a diocesan Entrust Retreat that reignited my faith and helped me reconnect with God.”

Let your story show how the Appeal is more than a campaign. It is a lifeline for thousands of people.

3. Connect to the Bigger Picture

Help your parish see the ripple effect:

- “The Bishop’s Appeal supports Catholic Charities, which offers financial health resources and support for couples looking to grow their family by adoption.”
- “The Appeal supports leadership formation, training for catechists in our parish faith formation program and educators in our Catholic schools, and parish ministries that shape the future of our Church.”
- “When we give, we become part of something bigger. We become a part of something holy.”

4. Make the Ask

Be bold and compassionate:

“Today, I invite you to consider supporting a mission that changes lives. Every contribution — large or small — creates real impact. This is about coming together as a community with compassion, generosity, and purpose. When we give, we build something greater than ourselves.

If you’ve never made a gift before, this is a wonderful moment to take that first step. Your participation matters. Your generosity matters. Your decision to get involved can inspire others to do the same.

For those who are able, I welcome you to join the Crozier Society. More than 3,700 Catholics across our Diocese participate in this special community of supporters. Crozier members are invited to the annual Bishop’s Appreciation Mass and Luncheon, as well as the Spring Mass, and they receive The Little Books during Advent, Lent, and Easter—resources that accompany them on their faith journey throughout the year.

If you can, please consider a gift of \$500 or more to the 2026 Bishop’s Appeal to join the Crozier Society. Your generosity not only strengthens the mission of the Church but also helps us grow this community of dedicated disciples. Together, we can reach more people, strengthen more families, and continue the work that brings hope to so many.”

Let them know how to give:

“You can return your pledge card by mail or give online at www.catholicfoundationgb.org/give. The link is also available in your bulletin.”

5. Close with Gratitude

End with warmth and encouragement:

“Thank you for listening, and thank you for prayerfully considering a gift. On behalf of <Parish Name> and our parish family, thank you for being part of this mission. May God bless you abundantly.”

Quick Facts to Support Your Talk

What is the Bishop’s Appeal? It’s the annual diocesan campaign that funds vital ministries across northeastern Wisconsin, many of which directly support our parish through faith formation resources and catechist training, Catholic Charities outreach, diaconate formation, and even more ministries that impact <<Parish Name>>.

Your Gifts Are Already at Work:

- **More than 500 catechists and Catholic school teachers** have received training, attended development days, and can count on the Office of Evangelizing Catechesis and Catholic schools. Because of your support, these educators help more than 22,500 children begin a lifelong friendship with Jesus.
- **More than 10,000 people** have experienced the light of Christ through the compassionate outreach of Catholic Charities.
- **More than 1,400 disciples** have been formed through diocesan Entrust Retreats and the Missionary Leadership Institute. These leaders are given resources and inspiration to share Jesus with more people in our parishes.
- **More than 150 deacons** walk with parishioners through the hills and valleys of life.

Why It Matters: The Appeal helps us live our faith not only in words, but also in action. It’s how we care for the vulnerable, teach the next generation, and build strong, faith-filled communities.

Looking for a Witness Talk outline for a specific ministry? Visit the Catholic Foundation parish resources page to see outlines for various ministries like diaconate, catechists, and more! Go to www.catholicfoundationgb.org/parishresources/

For questions or more information about Witness Talks, please contact Tammy Danz, Bishop’s Appeal Director, at 920.272.8123, email bishopsappeal@cgbwi.org or visit the Catholic Foundation website at www.catholicfoundationgb.org. Thank you!