

Bishop's Appeal Witness Talk - Diaconate

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 give, to serve, and to believe.

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 (Deacon Formation Focus):

- How has the Bishop's Appeal supported my formation as a deacon from discernment, to classroom study, to pastoral leader training?
- How has the Appeal strengthened my ability to serve my parish through preaching, pastoral care, and sacramental ministry?
- Who in my parish or community has been touched by the ministries I'm able to offer because of my deacon formation?
- Why do I continue to support the Bishop's Appeal, and why do I believe others should invest in the formation of future deacons?

Let your answers guide your message.

Suggested Structure for Your Talk

1. Warm Introduction

Start with a heartfelt greeting:

“Good morning. I'm Deacon <Speaker Name>, and I've had the privilege of serving at <Parish Name> for <Number of Years> years. Today, I want to share how the Bishop's Appeal strengthens our mission to serve, to accompany, and to bring Christ's love to those most in need.”

2. Personal Story

“As a deacon, I've seen firsthand how the Appeal supports formation programs that prepared me for ministry. It also uplifts outreach efforts that allow us to walk with the poor, the grieving, and the lonely.”

3. Connection to the Diocese

“Through leadership training, new deacons and lay ministers are formed. The Appeal is the heartbeat of our diocesan mission. It is because of the Diocese I can serve our parishioners here at <Parish Name> and walk with you all through the highs and lows of life.”

4. Make the Ask

“I invite you to join me in giving. Whether this is your first time supporting the Bishop’s Appeal, or you have given for many years, your gift is a powerful way to serve others and to be Christ’s hands and feet in our community. A first gift of \$25 makes a real difference.

If you are able, a gift of \$500 or more enrolls you in the Crozier Society, a special community of more than 3,700 supporters who help the Church reach even further with the love of Jesus. You will receive invitations to the fall Crozier Mass and Luncheon and the Spring Crozier Mass, both with Bishop Ricken. Your membership also includes the Little Book series in Advent, Lent, and Easter to support you on your faith journey. You also will receive updates about diocesan news and more.

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:

“Your support has helped me and thousands of other people deepen our faith and share Jesus. Thank you for your generosity and for being part of this mission of mercy.”

Quick Facts to Support Your Talk

What is the Bishop’s Appeal? It’s the annual appeal campaign that funds vital diocesan ministries across northeastern Wisconsin. This includes the formation and ongoing training of deacons who serve our parish through preaching, pastoral care, baptisms, funerals, outreach to the sick and homebound, and walking with families in times of need.

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

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