

BAA-2017

Frequently Asked Questions

1. What is the Bishop's Annual Appeal? Why is it important for me to support the Bishop's Annual Appeal?

The Bishop's Annual Appeal has been a unified effort in which all the faithful are asked by Bishop Bradley to provide critical financial support to the Diocese of Kalamazoo. A faith response means that we heed the call that God makes to all of us to advance the work of the Church in our diocese. Our response serves people in ways we may not realize. Gifts to the Bishop's Annual Appeal serve as the primary funding source for the ministries, services and programs conducted by the Diocesan ministry offices and also supports the cost of seminarian tuition and formation for the future priests of the Diocese.

2. When does the appeal start?

The appeal is always conducted in the weeks following Easter, traditionally in late April-early May and is scheduled to be completed in May or early June. However, due to many circumstances some parish communities do take some time longer to complete their appeals successfully.

3. How does my parish benefit from the Bishop's Annual Appeal?

Every Appeal gift goes to support diocesan programs and ministries which in turn provide services that no one parish can offer on its own. Additionally, 100 percent of contributions received beyond a parish's assigned target is returned to the parish to support local ministry priorities. As of June 1, 2016, we have returned \$111,632.61 to our parishes for the 2016 Bishop's Annual Appeal to support parish initiatives.

4. What is funded by the Bishop's Annual Appeal?

We are called to support good causes beyond our own parish, so we are called to support the diocese. Your gift assists in the following areas: parish and diocesan ministries such as marriage and family programs; faith formation and Catholic education such as the Office of Catholic Schools, Diocesan communications, clergy and religious support, vocations and seminarian formation and education, social services such as Catholic Charities Southwest Michigan, and other pastoral services to support parishes and schools.

5. How are parish goals determined?

Parish goals are determined by a formula based on the Sunday and holy day collections of the previous fiscal year from July 1, through June 30. That amount, relative to all other parishes is the percentage assigned as a parish target.

The formula for calculating the individual Goals for the upcoming BAA 2017 Campaign is as follows:

- 1.) Sunday and Holy Day collections – a reduction of \$600 for each student reported as attending one of our Catholic Schools = Adjusted Sunday and Holy day income.
- 2.) Adjusted Sunday and Holy day income x 18.85% = Parish Goal before adjustment for the increase/decrease Cap

Parish Goal before Cap adjustment +/- Cap adjustment limiting decreases to no more than 15.0% or increases to no more than 7.5% = BAA 2017 Goal

6. What if my parish goes over goal? Where would the excess go?

Should your parish exceed its goal of gifts paid, 100% of the additional funds goes back to your parish.

7. Why do we have so many second collections?

When the Bishop's Annual Appeal was inaugurated in 2010, Bishop Bradley felt strongly to bring out of the former appeal total many of the second collections so that the parishioners may know and understand the various ministries outside of the Diocese of Kalamazoo that we support as a Church. Additionally, this allows each parishioner household to decide which of the second collections to support.

8. Does my parish pay assessments on my Bishop's Annual Appeal refund?

The simple answer is no. The appeal target calculation is based on Sunday and holy day collections only. Bishop's Annual Appeal rebates and estate gifts to the parish are examples of income that is not included in the calculation.

9. What happens if my parish does not meet its established goal?

All parishes are required to either meet their target through the appeal process or make up the difference from parish income or reserves.

10. Why are parishioners asked to pledge different amounts?

Each of us has been gifted with a variety of different incomes and financial abilities. Also, each of us has different level of financial responsibilities. This makes it difficult to simply divide the parish goal by the number of parishioners to determine an appropriate gift amount. Consistent with tenets of Catholic sacrificial giving, this allows for "not equal gifts but equal sacrifice."

11. Why are pledges encouraged, instead of one-time donations?

Pledges provide parishioners with the opportunity to make a more significant and intentional gift to the mission of the Church. A contribution is easier to pay over a period of time rather than a one-time gift. A pledge is not legally binding but rather a statement of what the parishioner intends to do.

12. Are any of the funds for the Bishop's Annual Appeal allocated for civil lawsuits or judgments?

No. All funds go to the pastoral, educational, and social needs of our diocese.

13. How will progress of the Appeal be communicated to the parishes?

To track the progress of your parish, please visit the diocesan website. In your web browser, type www.diokzoo.org. After the homepage appears, click on "About" then "Bishop's Annual Appeal." Scroll down to the heading "Documents" on the left-hand side of the page and click on the link for "Bishop's Annual Appeal Current Tracking Report." You will find your parish listed there.

14. How much should I give?

Charitable giving reflects our Christian stewardship of treasure. Giving back to God should require sacrifice while recognizing God's generosity to us individually. Your gift should be made after prayerful reflection, recalling that your gift will support the mission of the Church here in our diocese and beyond.

15. Will I receive a tax statement?

Your gift to the Bishop's Annual Appeal is tax deductible. A tax statement will be postmarked to you by January 31st.

16. I have made my pledge. When can I expect to receive a statement?

After all the gifts and pledge information is entered into the data system, the first run of pledge statements will be in early July and will continue through the month of April the following year until the close of the appeal calendar.

17. How do I make an online pledge?

To make an online pledge, please visit the diocesan website. In your web browser, type www.diokzoo.org. After the homepage appears, click on the "Donate Now" button. You will then be re-directed to the online giving page. If you already have a login user name and password, just enter that information. If you do not have a login username and password, you can create one on that page and then make your pledge.