I am the Light of the World

John 8:12

Let's carry His light together.

2026
CATHOLIC
SHARING APPEAL

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Dear Pastors, Administrators, Council Members, and Volunteers,

Thank you for your continued leadership and generous support of the Catholic Sharing Appeal (CSA). Your dedication and partnership are truly appreciated, and we are grateful for the many ways you encourage generosity and stewardship within your parish communities.

Through your efforts, the Catholic Sharing Appeal becomes a tangible expression of our shared mission as a diocesan Church. The CSA allows us to care for and educate our young people through our Catholic schools, serve those most in need through Catholic Charities and outreach programs, and strengthen our Church through evangelization and ministry initiatives. Each gift given—whether large or small—directly supports these vital ministries, ensuring that the love and presence of Christ continue to reach individuals and families across our Diocese, including within your own parish and beyond.

This manual is designed to assist you every step of the way. Inside, you will find timelines, sample materials, and practical resources to help you plan and implement the appeal effectively in your parish. Our goal is to make this process as clear, organized, and supportive as possible.

Please know that our office is always available to you. If you have questions, need guidance, or would like assistance at any point during the appeal, do not hesitate to contact us. We are here to support you and your parish.

We look forward to working with you again this year and are grateful for your continued collaboration in advancing the mission of the Church through the Catholic Sharing Appeal.

God Bless,

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Let us Pray

You tell us: ***"I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will not walk in darkness, but will have the light of life."***

Let Your light shine in us.
Fill our hearts with compassion and courage, so we may serve You faithfully.

Bless the Catholic Sharing Appeal. Through every gift, strengthen our outreach efforts and food pantries, our faith formation programs, our youth and young adult ministries, and our parishes and schools in every corner of West Virginia.

Teach us to give generously and with trust, remembering that every gift matters and every dollar supports the work of Your Church.

Make us one family in mission, carrying Your light to all who need hope.
We ask this through Christ our Lord.

Amen.

What is the Catholic Sharing Appeal?

The Catholic Sharing Appeal (CSA) is an annual diocesan initiative that invites Catholics to support the shared mission of the Church while also strengthening their own parish communities. Established in 2007, the CSA has become a vital and dependable way for parishes to raise significant funding for their parish needs, while also supporting ministries that serve people across the Diocese. Contributions to the CSA fund essential works such as Catholic education, evangelization efforts, prison ministry, Catholic Charities West Virginia, and Camp Carlo, all of which serve individuals and families at different stages of life and faith. The appeal also supports the CSA Grant Program, which provides financial assistance to parishes, food pantries, and Catholic schools. Through shared sacrifice and generosity, the Catholic Sharing Appeal allows the Church to respond to spiritual, social, and material needs, ensuring that vital ministries continue to thrive both at the parish level and throughout the wider community.

2026 APPEAL FUNDING WILL BE ALLOCATED THE FOLLOWING WAY:

Parishes and Missions - (Up to $1,310,000+)

- Parish Share
- Parish Grants
- Evangelization

Shared Ministries - (Up to $405,000)

- Formation & Ministry
- Camp Carlo
- Prison Ministry
- Social Ministry
- Food Pantry Grants
- CCWVa
- Holy Family Child Care Center

Catholic Education - (Up to $285,000)

- School-Based Health
- Tuition Assistance
- Catholic School Grants

CSA Costs - (Up to $100,000)

CSA GRANT FUNDING

CSA grant funding is available for Parishes/Missions, Catholic Schools, and food pantries that are a direct mission of a parish within the DWC. Parishes must be at 50% of the parish goal by December 31st in order to be awarded. **Applications must be submitted by October 31, 2026.** Grant applications will be available on the CSA website, under the GRANTS tab.

$154,537 awarded to 23 parishes & missions in 2025
$87,115 awarded to 24 Catholic Schools in 2025
$77,000 awarded to 8 food pantries in 2025
*as of 1/6/2026

Catholic Sharing Appeal Components

Packet from Diocese to Parishes
- Success Manual, In-Pew Pledge/Prayer Cards, Posters, Bulletin Insert

Mailing #1
- Letter From Bishop Brennan, pledge card, return envelope

Mailing #2
- Letter from pastor, pledge card, return envelope

Lay Speaker/Commitment Weekend
- Lay Speaker will talk at Mass and pledge cards will be collected

Mailing #3
- SYBUNT (to those who gave **S**ome **Y**ear **B**ut **U**nfortunately **N**ot **T**his Year)

Mass of Gratitude
- Invitations will be mailed to all 2026 CSA donors

Giving Tuesday
- National day of giving celebrated the Tuesday after Thanksgiving

Year End Giving Correspondence
- Letter to all households recapping the parish year - sent by parish

Tax Receipt Mailing
- Official tax acknowledgement of all gifts to the 2026 CSA

Each mailing will be followed up with a corresponding email. Pledge reminders will be mailed the first week of each month. There will also be corresponding social media posts - please be sure to Like and Share!

Be sure to check the CSA website for additional resources: **dwc.org/CSA**

TIMELINE OF EVENTS

January

- 27 Tax Receipt Mailing (2025 donations)

February

- **19 CSA Parish/Pastor Meeting**

March

- 2 Mailing #1 - from Bishop
- **6 Pastors Letters Due**
- 14-15 Lay Speaker/Commitment Weekend

April

- 20 Mailing #2 - from Pastor (mailed by DWC)
- 10 Email follow-up

June

- 15 Mailing #3 - SYBUNT

October

- 12 Mass of Gratitude Invitations
- **31 CSA Grant Application Deadline**

November

- 6 End of Year Mailing from Parish (Optional)
- 23 Mass of Gratitude

December

- 1 Giving Tuesday
- 31 ALL GIFTS MAILED TO DWC

Commitment Weekend Checklist

- ☐ Pledge Cards in the Pews
- ☐ Posters Hung around the Parish
- ☐ Lay Speaker Requested
- ☐ Best Practices Reviewed
- ☐ Announcement in Bulletin
- ☐ Social Media Post Scheduled

Pledge Collection & Acknowledgements

Do not open envelopes collected at the parish.

Place all donations and in-pew envelopes in a large envelope/package. Packages can be mailed (via certified mail) or delivered to the front desk of the Diocese of Wheeling-Charleston.

Mail to:
Catholic Sharing Appeal
P.O. Box 230
Wheeling, WV 26003

or Deliver to:
Diocese of Wheeling-Charleston
1311 Byron St.
Wheeling, WV 26003

All donors will receive an acknowledgement letter from Bishop Brennan. We highly encourage you to thank your donors at the parish level as well. A sample acknowledgement letter is included in the manual. For an updated list of donors from your parish, contact Heidi Sforza or Cayla Morando in the Stewardship and Development Office.

Parish progress bars will be updated weekly on the CSA website. Feel free to call at any time for an update.

Process for Checks Made Payable to the Parish for the CSA:

- Deposit the checks made payable to your parish, as well as any cash collected.
- Record this amount on your parish finance reports under 21040 Other Diocesan Collections. Deposits entered under this number (21040) are not considered taxable income. For even better records on the deposit of funds, for the 21040 Other Diocesan Collections, you can set up a sub account called "Catholic Sharing Appeal." If you are not familiar with how to do this, please feel free to contact Justin Pastorius (jpastorius@dwc.org) in the finance office and he can assist you with this.
- Write a check (payable to the Catholic Sharing Appeal) for the total amount. Send that check, along with a detailed list of the donors' name, address and gift amount to our office – Catholic Sharing Appeal, PO Box 230, Wheeling WV 26003.
- Record this "expense" on your parish finance reports under 30131 Diocesan Collections
- Donations deposited by the parish must be receipted by the parish. Donors will not receive a receipt from the CSA.

Process for sending a check from the parish:

If you are sending money to the CSA on a parish check, please be sure to include documentation with each check such as whether it was from a specific fundraiser for the CSA, a special collection, cash donations, etc. With the check please include a summary of the donor's name, address, and gift amounts. Or, if it is from a fundraiser or special event earmarked for the CSA, please just document that.

Best Practices

- **The pastor's visible support is essential.**
- Begin all CSA activities with prayer.
- Keep the focus on mission, ministry, and impact - not dollar amounts.
- Volunteers should know the purpose of the CSA, and how funds are used at both the parish and diocesan level.
- Volunteers should be provided with clear scripts or talking points.
- Use simple, consistent language across your homilies, bulletins, and announcements.
- Highlight how the CSA supports local, diocesan AND parish ministries and provide tangible outcomes.
- Make pledge cards available in the pews and give clear instructions from the pulpit.
- Reinforce that Every Gift Matters.
- Use gentle reminders - bulletin updates, pulpit announcements and parish emails.
- Thank parishioners frequently and sincerely - publicly and privately.
- Celebrate milestones - participation, percentages, grant awards...
- Frame the CSA as part of a year-round stewardship mindset, not a one time event.

Additional Resources

Sample Pastor's Letter

(Placed on Parish Letter head)

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

Peace be with you.

I am deeply thankful for the faith, generosity, and love you show our parish year after year. Your commitment allows our parish to be a place where the sacraments are celebrated, the Gospel is proclaimed, and our neighbors are cared for. The Catholic Sharing Appeal is an extension of that same spirit of stewardship—it is how we join with Catholics across West Virginia to serve Christ together.

When we give to the CSA, we are not simply supporting a campaign; we are investing in the mission of the Church. Through this Appeal, lives are touched through outreach and food pantries, faith is strengthened through evangelization, young people are formed through youth and young adult ministry, and parishes and schools across the state receive vital support. Every gift truly matters, because together those gifts allow the light of Christ to reach places we may never see ourselves.

The CSA also directly supports our own parish. This year, our parish goal is **$XXXX.** The first 50% of the goal will support the mission of the Church talked about above. Everything raised over 50% of the parish goal will come directly to the parish where will use it to **insert parish case for support.**

Your participation helps ensure that these plans can become a reality, strengthening our parish for years to come.

I ask you to prayerfully consider how you can support the Catholic Sharing Appeal this year. Whether you are able to give a one-time gift or choose a monthly recurring donation, please know that your generosity—large or small—is deeply appreciated and makes a real difference. I also encourage you to visit the CSA website to learn more about the ministries it supports and the impact it has across our diocese.

Thank you for your faith, your prayers, and your continued generosity. Together, as one parish family and one diocesan Church, we can carry Christ's light into our community and beyond.

With gratitude and prayers,

Pastor Signature

Pastor Name

Sample Lay Speaker Presentation

Good morning.

My name is ___, and I'm grateful to be here as a fellow parishioner to share why the Catholic Sharing Appeal matters to me and why I believe it matters to all of us.

Our parish is where our faith becomes personal. It's where we gather for Mass, where our children receive the sacraments, where we find comfort in times of grief and joy in moments of celebration. The Catholic Sharing Appeal strengthens this life we share locally by supporting ministries that many of us rely on—religious education and faith formation, parish leadership training, vocations support, and assistance for parishes that don't have the same resources we do.

But the Appeal also reminds us that our parish is part of something much larger. We belong to a diocesan family. Through the Catholic Sharing Appeal, we help priests and deacons, support Catholic Charities programs that serve the poor and vulnerable, provide marriage and family ministries, and ensure pastoral care for those who are sick, elderly, or imprisoned. These are ministries no single parish could sustain alone—but together, we can.

I personally give to the Catholic Sharing Appeal because my faith has been nurtured by people and programs that existed long before I arrived here—and I want to make sure they are there for those who come after me. I give because I've seen how shared sacrifice turns into real help: a seminarian answering a call, a family receiving counseling in a difficult moment, a parish kept alive because others stepped forward.

Scripture tells us, "I am the light of Christ." That light isn't meant to be hidden or kept to ourselves. When we support the Catholic Sharing Appeal, we let Christ's light shine beyond our own pews and into places we may never personally go. And when we all participate, even in small ways, that light grows stronger.
Every gift matters. Participation matters more than the amount. When we give together, we truly carry His light together—as one parish and one diocesan family.

Thank you for your generosity, your prayerful consideration, and for being part of this shared mission.

Commitment Weekend Announcement

Brothers and sisters in Christ,

Today is Commitment Sunday for the Catholic Sharing Appeal. This Appeal supports essential ministries that strengthen our parish and unite us with our wider diocesan family—ministries that serve families, care for those in need, and bring Christ's love beyond our own walls.

The Catholic Sharing Appeal is an invitation for each of us to participate in this shared mission. It is not about equal giving, but about equal sacrifice. Every gift matters, and every response is important.

On the pledge card in your pew, you'll find a QR code that allows you to make your gift easily and securely online. If you have already responded to the Appeal through the mail, thank you for your generosity and faithful support.
Before we collect the pledge cards, I invite us to pause and pray the Appeal prayer together, which is printed on the card in the pew, asking the Holy Spirit to guide our generosity.

Loving God, We thank You for the many gifts You have entrusted to us.
Open our hearts to generosity, that we may share in the mission of Your Church. May our gifts bring hope, healing, and faith to those in need. As Your Son reminds us, "I am the light of the world," help us to walk in that light and reflect it through our giving. We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Jesus reminds us that He is the light of the world. When we support the Catholic Sharing Appeal, we reflect that light beyond our parish. When we all participate, we truly carry His light together.

At this time, I invite you to prayerfully complete your pledge card. Thank you for your generosity and your commitment. The ushers will now assist us as we collect the pledge cards.

Intercession

For the Church:
That through the Catholic Sharing Appeal, we may respond generously to Christ's call to be His light in the world, strengthening our parish and our diocesan family through shared sacrifice and faithful stewardship, let us pray to the Lord.

Commitment Weekend Follow-Up Announcement

Brothers and sisters in Christ,

I want to take a moment to thank all of you who have already responded to the Catholic Sharing Appeal. Your generosity—through your prayers and your gifts—is deeply appreciated and truly makes a difference. Because of you, vital ministries that support our parish and our wider diocesan family can continue to serve, heal, and strengthen lives.

The Catholic Sharing Appeal is so important because it allows us, as one Church, to do together what we cannot do alone. It supports ministries that serve families, care for those in need, strengthen parish life, and extend Christ's love far beyond our own community.

I also want you to know that I have made my own gift to the Catholic Sharing Appeal. I give because I believe in this mission and in the good it accomplishes when we come together in shared sacrifice.

If you have not yet had the opportunity to respond, I invite you to prayerfully consider doing so. Every gift matters, and every act of participation helps us continue this important work. Together, we reflect Christ's light and carry His light together throughout our parish and our diocese.

Thank you again for your generosity and your faithful support.

Intercession

For our parish and diocesan family:
In gratitude for all who have generously supported the Catholic Sharing Appeal, and that those still discerning their response may be guided by the Holy Spirit to share in this mission of faith and service, reflecting Christ's light together, let us pray to the Lord.

Sample Acknowledgement Letter
(From the Pastor)

Dear **[SALUTATION],**

I wanted to reach out personally to thank you for your generous gift to the Catholic Sharing Appeal. Your support means so much to me and to our parish community.

Your generosity helps ensure that our parish remains strong and connected to the wider work of the Church. Through the Appeal, we are able to take part in ministries that no single parish could carry on its own—supporting seminarian formation, parish services, outreach to those in need, and so many other vital efforts throughout our diocese. Because of you, our parish is not standing alone, but sharing in the mission of a larger diocesan family.

When you give to the Catholic Sharing Appeal, you help extend the care and compassion of our parish beyond our own walls. It is a beautiful reminder that we are united as one Church, working together to serve Christ and one another. I am deeply grateful for your commitment and for the role you play in strengthening both our parish and our diocese.

Please know of my prayers for you and your loved ones, and thank you again for being such an important part of our parish family.

With gratitude and prayers,

Pastor Signature

Pastor

I look forward to seeing your family at Mass this weekend!

Contact Information

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