



PARISH MANUAL

2025-26 Catholic Ministries Appeal

for the Diocese of Scranton

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PRAYER

Lord Jesus Christ, you are the source of our hope and the fulfillment of every promise.

In this Jubilee Year of Hope, renew our hearts with joy, trust, and faith in Your saving love.

Help us seek and find You in all that we do.

May we be faithful disciples and responsible stewards of the many gifts you have entrusted to us.

May our time, talent, and treasure bear witness to our gratitude and proclaim the hope we share in you.

Strengthen our families, our Parishes, and our Diocese; we humbly ask that you help unite us through this year's Catholic Ministries Appeal so that together we may accomplish what no one of us can do alone.

Grant us the spirit of true Christian Stewardship, so that in all things we may carry out Your mission with faith and joy.

Bless the Church of Scranton through the remainder of this Jubilee Year and beyond, that we may shine as a people of hope.

We ask this through Christ our Lord.

Amen.

MISSION STATEMENT OF THE DIOCESE OF SCRANTON

We, the Catholic community of the Diocese of Scranton,
are called through Baptism to imitate
the servant leadership of Jesus Christ.
In union with our Holy Father, the Pope,
we proclaim the Gospel faithfully,
celebrate the sacraments joyfully,
and boldly promote life, justice and peace
in northeastern and north central Pennsylvania.



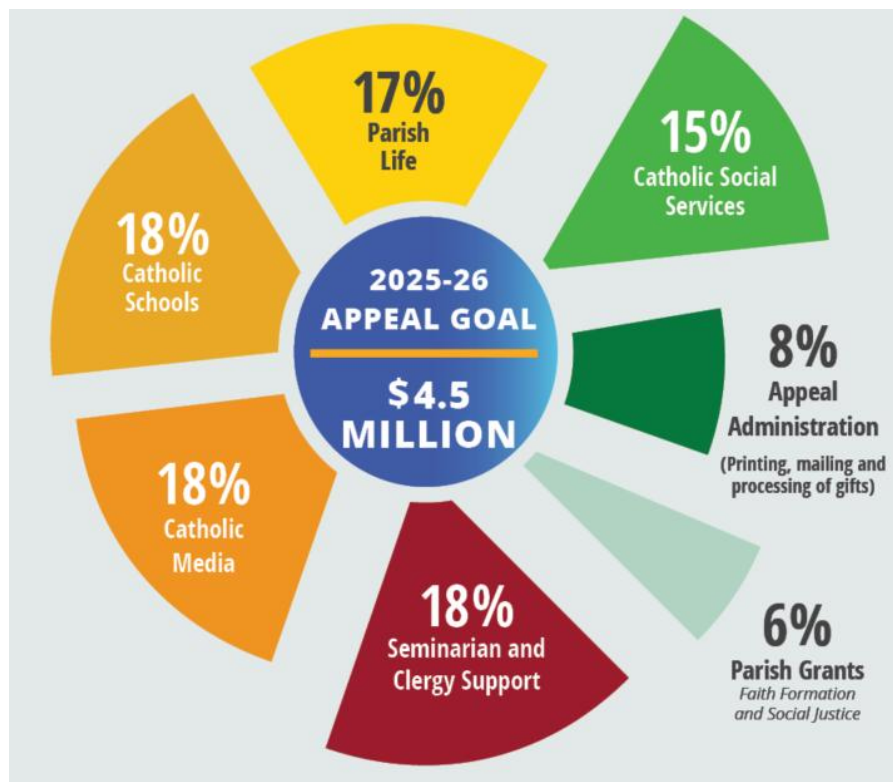
CASE STATEMENT

The Catholic Ministries Appeal remains the single most important annual fundraising initiative for the Diocese of Scranton. Carrying forward the legacy of previous Appeals (formerly the Diocesan Annual Appeal, and, before that, the Bishop's Annual Appeal), we look forward to the future of hope that we may more work closer in unity as the Church of Scranton.

Together we are the hands and the heart of Christ - reaching out, lifting up, and building the Kingdom of God one act of charity at a time.

Gifts to the Catholic Ministries Appeal provide financial support to 6 key areas of our local Mission. They help:

- Form our future priests and care for priests who have retired after decades of service to the Diocese of Scranton.
- Proclaim the good news through Catholic Media
- Support Catholic Education in our 19 Diocesan Elementary and High Schools
- Strengthen Parish Life
- Provide critical funding to Catholic Social Services to feed the hungry and shelter the homeless
- Fund Faith Formation and Social Justice Grants awarded to our parishes working to expand the current reach of the Appeal in their local communities.



THE IMPORTANCE OF YOUR SUPPORT

Last year, we saw improved financial results as we transitioned the name of the Annual Appeal from *Diocesan Annual Appeal* to *Catholic Ministries Appeal*. This renaming was done to better align mission priorities and to share the impact made possible by the generosity of our brothers and sisters who support the Annual Appeal.

The Appeal provides the funds necessary to support programs and ministries throughout the entire diocese. It is our job as pastors, priests, Parish Life Coordinators, Appeal Ambassadors, as well as parish and diocesan staff to educate our fellow Catholics about the good work that is accomplished through the Appeal.

When we work together in unity, we can do what no one parish or individual can do on their own, and by doing so offer hope to those among us in great need.

Personalizing, publicizing and speaking positively of the Appeal must focus primarily on the **impact** and what we support throughout our diocese; when you talk with fellow parishioners and friends, please share with them the good work of Catholic Ministries throughout our diocese and share with them your support of the Appeal.

As parish leaders, we have a lot of work in front of us. We need to educate ourselves about the Appeal and the ministries it supports, so that we can speak about them with confidence. It is important that we review the Appeal materials, so that we understand all the tasks that need to be done to make the Appeal a success in our parish. We need to make sure that ALL parishioners are provided the opportunity to give to the Appeal.

Finally, please pray for the success of the Appeal. Pray for those we talk with, that they may open their hearts and their minds and listen to God's call. Pray for a positive spirit in your parish toward the Appeal and pray that we can complete the work that God has sent us forth to accomplish.

LEADERSHIP ROLES

THE PASTOR

Thank you for your constant effort in supporting the Catholic Ministries Appeal. The pastor's ownership and engaged support of the Appeal is the single most important factor in a parish's success.

What does your role entail?

- Pray for the success of this campaign
- Make your gift to this year's Appeal
- Present the Appeal in a positive and enthusiastic manner
- ***Appoint an Appeal Ambassador****
 - *It is strongly recommended that the Appeal Ambassador be someone other than the Pastor. Ideally, this appointee possesses leadership qualities, is comfortable speaking to others about Catholic Ministries and the resulting impact of donating to this fundraising initiative. Look to existing parish leadership donors and those who are already providing generous support to the Appeal.
- Review your parish weekly progress report (*these reports will be delivered on Saturday mornings beginning Saturday, August 23, 2025).
- Identify two areas where your parish benefits from the Appeal or can in the future AND share those stories with your parish community; contact Joe Strubeck (Secretary for Development) and/or Eric Deabill (Secretary for Communications) to personalize the Appeal video for your parish or select one that will resonate most with your parishioners.
- Encourage participation: "Our goal is 100% participation!"
- Thank parishioners for their support! (Informally, through conversations and in sending forth at the conclusion of liturgy when you notice they recently donated to the Appeal; Formally, through handwritten correspondence or an email acknowledging their gifts to the Appeal and extending your personal thanks)

APPEAL AMBASSADOR

Thank you for sharing your talent and time! You will assist your pastor and parish community in reaching your parish goal by inviting and educating parishioners on the importance of the Annual Appeal.

What does your role entail?

- Pray for the success of this campaign and make a gift to the Appeal
- Ensure your parish website is up to date (remove old Appeal information and post this year's graphics; remove notices and outdated information as appropriate)
- Present the Appeal in a positive and enthusiastic manner
- Ensure posters are displayed and updated throughout the campaign, and graphics are used in the parish bulletin and on social media
- Serve as coordinators for Celebration Weekend, ensuring that the Appeal video can be shown and that the parish is prepared to distribute and collect in-pew envelopes
- Visit all Parish councils, societies, and other ministries, speak about the importance of participation in the Appeal, and distribute and collect materials/envelopes
- Keep the invitation open and look for personal invitation moments with other leaders, parish families, and parish groups
- Assist the Pastor/Parish Life Coordinator by having regular discussion about Appeal progress and assist in preparing any acknowledgements and thanking donors for their support (*the Diocese of Scranton Development Office will send formal acknowledgment letters and tax receipts, but this personalized approach to thanking donors at your parish is also good practice.).

PARISH STAFF

Thank you for your commitment to our local church! You will assist your pastor by promoting the Annual Appeal to your parish community.

What does your role entail?

- Pray for the success of this campaign and make a gift to the Appeal
- Present the Appeal in a positive and enthusiastic manner
- Review your parish weekly progress report (*this year, these reports will be delivered on Saturday mornings). Assist the pastor in acknowledging those who have given to the Appeal.
- Display posters in visible places
- See that graphics are used in the parish bulletin and on social media each week and that the parish website is kept up to date.
- Assist with Celebration Weekend if necessary

TIMELINE

**LATE JULY/
EARLY AUGUST**

CLERGY MEETINGS (4 REGIONAL MEETINGS THROUGHOUT THE DIOCESE)

WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 6

LETTER #1 (FROM BISHOP BAMBERA)

MID/LATE AUGUST

IN PEW MATERIALS, POSTERS, APPEAL VIDEOS MAILED TO PARISHES / VIDEOS POSTED TO APPEAL WEBSITE

TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 9

(1:30PM) VIRTUAL INFO SESSIONS FOR PARISH STAFF, BUSINESS MANAGERS, AMBASSADORS
JOIN VIA ZOOM:
[HTTPS://US06WEB.ZOOM.US/J/81665854052?PWD=9D1UBD0MLUFRF3CDCFOEQDFAN1BR0Q.1](https://us06web.zoom.us/j/81665854052?pwd=9D1UBD0MLUFRF3CDCFOEQDFAN1BR0Q.1)

WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 10

(9:00AM) VIRTUAL INFO SESSIONS FOR PARISH STAFF, BUSINESS MANAGERS, AMBASSADORS
JOIN VIA ZOOM:
[HTTPS://US06WEB.ZOOM.US/J/81179950424?PWD=RDNVDTCIWOIZ2WYBJYW7OGHJCRPDCB.1](https://us06web.zoom.us/j/81179950424?pwd=RDNVDTCIWOIZ2WYBJYW7OGHJCRPDCB.1)

SEPTEMBER 13 – 14

CELEBRATION WEEKEND (ALTERNATE)
VIDEO SHOWN AND IN-PEW WEEKEND

SEPTEMBER 20-21

CELEBRATION WEEKEND
VIDEO SHOWN AND IN-PEW WEEKEND

MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 29

LETTER #2 (PASTOR LETTER)

*****PASTORS/ASST. PASTORS SHOULD
ACTIVELY PROMOTE THE APPEAL THE FOLLOWING WEEKENDS SEPT. 27-28 AND OCT. 4-5 –
HIGHLIGHTING A SECOND LETTER ARRIVING LATE SEPTEMBER/ EARLY OCTOBER
AND A TARGET OF ACHIEVING GOAL BY DEC 31ST**

MONDAY, NOVEMBER 17

LETTER #3 (SEMINARIAN LETTER)

*****PASTORS/ASST. PASTORS SHOULD
ACTIVELY PROMOTE THE APPEAL THE FOLLOWING WEEKEND NOV. 22-23 –
HIGHLIGHTING THE THIRD LETTER AND A TARGET OF ACHIEVING GOAL BY DEC 31ST**

SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 23

FEAST OF CHRIST THE KING MASS
PRAYER INTENTIONS SUBMITTED BY PARISHIONERS WILL BE REMEMBERED AT THE 10 A.M. MASS CELEBRATED BY BISHOP BAMBERA.

**** NO LETTERS WILL BE MAILED IN DECEMBER**
PASTORS ENCOURAGED TO PROVIDE PROGRESS UPDATES IN BULLITIN
AND IN MASS ANNOUNCEMENTS THROUGHOUT ADVENT**

EARLY JANUARY 2026

LETTER #4 (RETIRED CLERGY)

FEBRUARY-APRIL 2025

WRAP-UP APPEAL ACTIVITIES BASED ON PROGRESS TO GOAL

KEYS TO SUCCESS

STEP 1 - Commitment Weekend Overview

- ☐ Focus on Catholic Ministries Appeal at the normal Mass starting time before the beginning of Mass or as preferred by the Pastor.
- ☐ Call attention to the Catholic Ministries Appeal Commitment Weekend.
- ☐ Show the Catholic Ministries Video. (See scripts)
- ☐ Encourage parishioners to complete the pledge form.
- ☐ Mention parish goal.

STEP 2 – Catholic Ministries Appeal Presentation

- ☐ Give thanks for the support from previous years.
- ☐ Share what the CMA funds (Catholic education, seminarian formation, Catholic Social Services, Parish Life, Communications, Faith Formation and Social Justice grants).
- ☐ Mention parish goal.
- ☐ Mention the goal of increasing parish participation by 5% (or 10%, or 15%)

STEP 3 – Catholic Ministries Appeal Video

- ☐ Let us take a moment to listen and watch a video that highlights how your gifts impact the programs and ministries of the Church that support our friends and neighbors throughout the Diocese.

STEP 4 - In-Pew Gift Reflection and Pledge

- ☐ Thank parishioners for their attention to the video.
- ☐ Remind parishioners that 100% of their gift supports these ministries only.
- ☐ Ask parishioners to pray for these ministries.
- ☐ Encourage parishioners to submit a pledge card today.
- ☐ Walk through pledge cards with parishioners (*allow ~3 to 5 minutes to complete pledge cards*)
- ☐ Collect pledge cards.
- ☐ Thank parishioners.

TALKING POINTS FOR IN PEW COLLECTION

We ask that all parishes carry out in-pew presentations from the ambo/pulpit during all Masses on Celebration Weekend. The in-pew presentation is an opportunity to share information about the ministries and services available to the parishes and communities within our Diocese, and the importance of supporting those ministries through the Annual Appeal.

The most effective in-pew presentations are delivered by the pastor and use the Appeal video. If you are challenged to show the Appeal video, please contact the Development Office.

Please remember to remind parishioners of the importance of their participation – no matter how great or small the gift. Remain positive and treat the process as a celebration.

The following is a suggested script that can be delivered by the pastor:

Good morning! Today, we celebrate Celebration Weekend for the Catholic Ministries Appeal (formerly the Diocesan Annual Appeal). The Appeal's theme again this year is "Our Call to Serve" and it takes on new life in this Jubilee Year of Hope. Last year, we were reminded that *Our Call to Serve* encourages a spirit of creating communities rooted in the Life of Jesus Christ.

The Catholic Ministries Appeal provides critical financial support to 6 key areas of our local Mission. Feeding the hungry and sheltering the homeless (the work of Catholic Social Services), education of our seminarians and future priests and caring for our retired clergy, faith formation programming through the Diocesan Office of Parish Life, support for our 15 Catholic elementary schools and 4 Catholic high schools, televising the Daily Mass from Saint Peter's Cathedral and the monthly publication of *The Catholic Light* as well as other programming through our Diocesan Media Office, and directly supporting parish programming through Faith Formation and Social Justice Grants funded annually by the Appeal.

I invite you to join me in serving others through the Catholic Ministries Appeal this year. I want to take a moment to show you a video that inspires me by revealing some of the significant impacts of this effort and shows how our parish, united with the other parishes throughout our diocese, is *Answering the Call to Serve*...

(Show the Appeal Video.)

{At the conclusion of the video, offer your own remarks about the impact of the Appeal for your parish, especially if you personalized the video by highlighting local impact, if you receive Faith Formation or Social Justice Grants, or if you reached your goal last year and received a rebate.}

There are several ways we can contribute to the Appeal. Many of you have already received information in the mail that included a pledge card. If you have already filled that out and sent it in or have made your gift online, thank you! *Our parish has already raised \$xxxx.xx or xx% toward our goal from early donations!*

If you are here today and have not yet given, there is a pledge card in the pew that you can either fill out and place in the collection basket, or you can scan the QR code on the pledge card to make your gift online. Please consider what you might contribute to these vital Catholic ministries over the next several months. We'll now take a few minutes to complete these cards.

(Please provide time for parishioners to complete the cards – suggestion is 3 to 5 minutes).

Thank you again for joining me in support of Catholic Ministries. Our generous gifts, combined with the gifts of all our brothers and sisters throughout *our* diocese, go a long way in supporting *our* Church. I encourage you to look at the ad shared in today's bulletin that will provide further information about the Appeal and the impact that you make possible because of your generosity.

PASTOR LETTER 2025

The Diocese will mail a letter from the Pastor to past donors in your parish. Letters are being drafted and will be sent electronically during the second week of September 2025.

MAKING A GIFT TO THE APPEAL

What type of gifts can you make?

- One Time Gift
- Sustaining (recurring, monthly) gift – will only stop if the donor asks us to stop.
- Pledge – has a beginning and end with a total amount indicated by the donor.
- Prayer Requests

What are the different ways that you can give?

- Give Online
 - Scan the QR code or visit www.annualappeal.org to make a gift using your credit card or ACH withdrawal
- By Phone
 - Please call 570.207.2250 to make a gift or to be connected to our donor services team for any questions
- Pledge Card
 - Complete the pledge card included with your letter

Please send your pledge card to the following address:

**Diocese of Scranton
Catholic Ministries Appeal
PO Box #994
Albany, NY 12201**

**Please note that the Diocese is using a trusted financial institution to process all donations to the Catholic Ministries Appeal. Utilizing this partner reduces our fundraising costs and ensures that more of your gift is directed to the ministries funded by the Appeal.*

- IRA Qualified Distributions and Stock Gifts
 - For us to properly identify and apply your gift, please contact Joseph Strubeck at jstrubeck@dioceseofscranton.org when you make your gift.
- Prayer Requests
 - Everyone is invited to discern and make a sacrificial gift. Prayers are always welcome gifts to the Appeal.

SAMPLE CAMPAIGN CADENCE AND ACTIVITIES

It can be difficult to “get started.” Here are some suggestions for timing of activities that can help you be successful in your efforts to reach your parish goal.

Beginning in early September:

- Place *Our Call to Serve – Catholic Ministries Appeal* ads in your bulletin and on social media – if your parish could run this ad for a few weeks leading up to Celebration Weekend, it will help!
- Remind parishioners that they will be receiving materials from the Diocese to make their gifts.
- Emphasize that gifts do not have to be made immediately; **pledges** that can be paid over several months have helped reach the goal more quickly.
- Stress that gifts of **any size** are welcome, and that **participation** is important.
- Hang your Appeal Goal posters in prominent locations; Appeal Ambassadors, Pastors and members of councils should build excitement by sharing *impact* stories of Catholic Ministries.
- Appeal Ambassadors should begin attending parish council, society, and ministry meetings.

Weekend of September 13/14:

- Place “Celebration Weekend is next weekend” ad in your bulletin and on social media.
- Stress that gifts of **any size** are welcome, and that **participation** is important.
- Share any social media posts from the Diocese on your parish’s social media.

Weekend of September 20/21:

- Show one of this year’s Appeal videos during all Masses this weekend.
- Pastor is asked to focus his homily on how tens of thousands of people throughout our diocese and beyond benefit from the Catholic ministries supported by the Annual Appeal and how parish support is critical to the success of the Appeal.
- Have in pew envelopes distributed.
- Place “Celebration Weekend” ad in bulletin.
- Note that a letter specific to the Appeal from the pastor will be mailed this week.
- Stress that gifts of **any size** are welcome, and that **participation** is important.

October:

- Place an ad of your choice in your bulletin AND/OR publicize progress toward goal in the bulletin – please try to complete at least one of these action items every week!
- Make an announcement that parishioners will receive a letter from you during the month to make their gift to the Appeal.
- Share as many social media stories pertaining to the Appeal as you can.

November

- Place an ad of your choice in your bulletin AND/OR publicize progress toward goal in the bulletin – please try to complete at least one of these action items every week!
- ***Encourage parishioners to make their gift before the end of the month to help your parish get to its goal as well as to close out the Appeal before the Advent/Christmas Season.***
- Coordinate with Appeal Ambassador to carry out parish plan for achieving its goal.

December

- If your parish has not made it to your goal, please continue, at your discretion, to publicize progress in your bulletin and/or through announcements at Mass.

January/February/March

- If your parish has not made it to your goal, please continue, at your discretion, to publicize progress in your bulletin and/or through announcements at Mass.
- If your parish is close to its goal, we're happy to work with you to help you reach your goal by personalizing bulletin ads, sending letters to outstanding donors in your parish, etc.
- You can also include an envelope in your parish envelope packet for the Appeal during any or all of these months.

The Diocesan Development Office is happy to work with you in whatever way you see fit to help your parish reach goal. We are a resource for you and your parish, and we're all happy to help you in any way that we can.

SUGGESTED PETITIONS
TO BE INCLUDED IN THE PRAYER OF THE FAITHFUL

These prayers of the faithful can be used at the pastor's discretion, but we do ask that you offer the some of the following intention during Celebration Weekend (September 20/21):

That we may answer *Our Call to Serve* and support Catholic ministries throughout the Diocese of Scranton, and that through our participation in the Annual Appeal continue to be channels of the living and loving presence of Christ, we pray to the Lord....

That each one of us will be open to God's *Call to Serve* in this Jubilee Year of Hope, and prayerfully consider how we can join in sacrifice to meet the needs of our faith community through the Annual Appeal, we pray to the Lord....

That we may see the Annual Appeal as an opportunity to extend our love and service beyond the boundaries of our parish, and, in doing so, unite with our brothers and sisters throughout the diocese in support of Catholic ministries which offer help and hope to those most in need, we pray to the Lord....

That we understand that we touch many lives through our support of the Annual Appeal, and that the people whose lives we touch may know Christ's love, we pray to the Lord....

That we may respond generously to this year's Appeal in support of the many Catholic ministries throughout our diocese as faithful stewards of the gifts God has entrusted to us, we pray to the Lord....

That the gifts we offer through the through the Annual Appeal in support of Catholic ministries throughout the Diocese of Scranton will truly reflect our love and thanksgiving for the many blessings that God has entrusted to us, we pray to the Lord....

That as we make our commitment in support of Catholic ministries to this year's Appeal, we may remember God's generosity to us, we pray to the Lord....

That God may bless our parish, strengthen our faith, and grant us the spirit of Catholic stewardship by opening our hearts to this year's Appeal, we pray to the Lord....

ANNUAL APPEAL VIDEOS

This year, two of the Appeal videos have been produced – one highlighting Vocations and the other highlighting Catholic Schools.

Additionally, Pastors/Parishes were invited to personalize their video by using a custom insert in place of the Vocations or Catholic Schools package. Parishes who have done this should use their custom video, but parishes in the vicinity may wish to show one of these videos highlighting the good work at neighboring parishes to inspire such work in their own!

*Detailed Descriptions of the Videos will Appear in **Appendix A** the week of September 8th.*

BULLETIN ANNOUNCEMENTS AND SOCIAL MEDIA

We have created parish bulletin announcements that are available to use weekly throughout the Catholic Ministries Appeal. Please begin using these bulletin announcements several weeks before Celebration Weekend and continue to use them. The ads are provided in color and black and white, and in JPEG and PDF format. They can be found on the Diocese of Scranton webpage under the Giving tab: **Parish Resources for the 2025 Catholic Ministries Appeal**.

We also ask that you use the same bulletin announcements on all social media channels, including Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram.

If you have any questions about bulletin ads or promotional announcements, please contact the Development Office at development@dioceseofscranton.org or 570.207.2250.

APPEAL PARISH REPORTS

The Development Office will email weekly parish reports every Saturday, beginning August 23, 2025. A notification from the diocesan database (Donor Perfect) will be delivered to the email addresses on record for your parish until the first gift for this year's Appeal has been recorded. Once gifts have been recorded, the reports will continue through the end of the rebate period (June 30, 2026) and include a list of parishioners who have participated by offering a gift or committed by pledge. Additionally, these reports will provide a real-time progress report of commitments vs. goal as well as cash received and a calculation of anticipated rebate.

Pastors, Appeal Ambassadors, Parish Life Coordinators and Assistant Pastors are encouraged to review thank those who have supported the Appeal.

Pastors can request a parish's progress at any time. Please contact the Development Office at development@dioceseofscranton.org or 570.207.2250.

DIOCESAN DEVELOPMENT OFFICE CONTACTS

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jstrubeck@dioceseofscranton.org
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Donor Relations Team

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Thank you for your support of Catholic Ministries!

On behalf of Bishop Bambera, THANK YOU for all your hard work and continued support of the Diocesan Annual Appeal.

Your leadership and enthusiasm in presenting this year's Appeal and inviting your parishioners to contribute Catholic ministries throughout our local church have a critical and significant impact on our ability to serve those among us in the greatest need.

Thank you for working with us in this shared ministry of stewardship.

