



OUR CATHOLIC APPEAL

The Catholic Foundation of Central Florida

Frequently Asked Questions (for Pastor Use Only)

How is the budget for the Diocese set?

Our Bishop defines the Diocese's spiritual priorities each year and works with administrators to set budgets accordingly. Financial support is strongest for priorities the Bishop believes best spread the Gospel. Each Diocesan department must demonstrate how their financial need aligns with the Bishop's spiritual vision for the year. The Diocesan Finance Committee can reduce departmental budgets when they don't align with the Bishop's ministerial goals or when they are forecast to exceed the *OCA* fundraising level. Budgets require the Bishop's approval.

Why was there an increase in this year's Our Catholic Appeal?

Higher overall operating costs associated with existing programs and ministries require more fundraising. In addition, our Diocese is blessed with the opportunity to train many seminarians each year. They will spread God's grace for years to come. Some years require additional funding due to the number of seminarians.

If Catholic Charities and Seminarians (and possibly other programs and ministries) are supported by Our Catholic Appeal, why are there separate diocesan second collections for these? Is the diocese double dipping?

Our diocese spreads God's glory in many ways: Catholic Charities of Central Florida feeds the hungry and finds housing for homeless families; Seminarian training prepares future priests; we provide a dignified retirement for priests who dedicated their lives to serving the Lord; through our Sister Diocese in the Dominican Republic, we operate Catholic schools educating more than 400 students. While our *OCA* campaign helps fund these efforts, it does not cover all of their expenses. As a result, our diocese supplements these spiritually vital endeavors through second collections. These supplementary collections help us meet our diocesan needs. They also offers some donors - who might not otherwise give - the chance to donate to a specific cause they cherish. Moreover, the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops mandates our diocese to participate in specific collections where the money is diverted outside of our diocese.

What happens if a parish does not reach their OCA goal/assessment?

A parish that doesn't raise enough money to cover their *OCA* obligation is required to draw from existing parish reserves. When a parish doesn't have adequate reserves, the Bishop will consider adjusting their financial obligation after conferring with the Diocesan Finance Committee & Finance Office.

How does Our Catholic Appeal benefit my parish and me?

Within our diocese, thousands of Catholics are served through *OCA*-funded efforts in areas including religious and academic education, employment, housing, hunger relief, seminarian training and spiritual ministry. When a parish surpasses its *OCA* goal, one-third of the (above-target) funding is returned to the parish to finance its immediate needs; one-third is placed in its endowment fund to cover future ministries and operations; the remainder is placed in a diocesan endowment to help care for retired/ailing priests.

Why are the administrative services included?

Our diocese provides wide-ranging academic, humanitarian and spiritual services over a nine-county area. As a result, we employ more than 3,100 people whose modern skills and expertise help us fulfill our spiritual mission. We pay employees fair wages and offer health benefits. Parishioner donations represent our primary source of income. We rely on this generosity to continue Christ's work with the help of our talented employees.

Why are there four mailings per year – one pre-Appeal and 3 follow-ups?

Currently, more than half of *OCA* fundraising happens by mail. Parishioners who donate by mail receive a 'thank you' note, and those who give \$250 or more receive a tax receipt letter at the end of the year, as required by the Internal Revenue Service (IRS). Our Diocese serves tens of thousands of parishioners who respond to *OCA* mailings at different times. As a result, we mail *OCA* requests in phases. It is also important to note that not all donors are able to respond at the same time of the year. That is why we receive a very healthy response for each of our mailings.