

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Q. HOW IS THE CENTENNIAL CAMPAIGN: *BUILDING OUR FUTURE TOGETHER* DIFFERENT FROM THE BISHOP'S SERVICES APPEAL (BSA)?

A. The Bishop's Services Appeal (BSA) is a vital source of **annual funding** for many ministries of the Diocese. Gifts to the BSA enhance Diocesan efforts to provide hope, dignity and compassion in the lives of others. The monies received by the Diocese are immediately distributed for use by the programs, ministries, and services supported by BSA.

The **Centennial Campaign** seeks to raise funds to increase the two existing endowments: Priests' Welfare Trust and Seminarian Education Endowment Fund. Funds will also be used to establish a new **Matthew 25 Endowment for Service to the Poor**, and provide targeted funds to our two Catholic Student Centers, UL Lafayette and LSUE.

Q. WILL MY PARISH CONDUCT THE ANNUAL BISHOP'S SERVICES APPEAL (BSA) DURING THE CENTENNIAL CAMPAIGN?

A. Yes, the BSA will continue to be conducted in all parishes during the Centennial Campaign. However, the BSA will be temporarily suspended when a parish enters into their Bloc phase of the Centennial Campaign. The BSA will resume in each parish once the active phase of the Centennial Campaign has been completed.

Q. IS THE PARISH GOAL AN ASSESSMENT?

A. No, the campaign goal is not an assessment. Every parish is asked to make a good faith effort in implementing the campaign, and follow the plan as designed by the Campaign Office.

Q. WHO WILL BE ASKED TO PARTICIPATE IN THE CENTENNIAL CAMPAIGN?

A. Every Catholic household in the Diocese of Lafayette will be asked to prayerful consider a financial pledge to the **Centennial Campaign**.

Q. WHY SHOULD I GIVE TO THE CENTENNIAL CAMPAIGN INSTEAD OF JUST GIVING MORE TO MY PARISH?

A. The Diocese and parishes operate in partnership, working together to strengthen our Church. This collaborative campaign will allow the Diocese *and* the parishes to meet their needs while enabling the Catholic Church to accomplish its pastoral, educational and charitable ministries.

Q. HOW WILL THIS CAMPAIGN AFFECT MY PARISH'S OFFERTORY?

A. In the short term, offertory giving is expected to remain constant. Throughout the campaign parishioners will be asked as good stewards to give above and beyond their regular giving. This campaign is not intended to deter parishioners from their regular offertory giving. In the long term, campaigns generally lead to higher offertory collections because parishioners are encouraged to embrace stewardship as a way of life in loving service – sharing and giving the first fruits of our labor.

Q. WHAT IS MEANT BY STEWARDSHIP AND SACRIFICIAL GIVING?

A. Christian stewardship is a form of worship in which we, as disciples of Jesus Christ, receive God's gifts gratefully, cultivate them responsibly and share them lovingly. We return them with loving increase to the Lord. Stewardship is the generous giving of one's time, talent, and treasure as lay ministers and financial donors. Sacrificial giving means to give out of one's substance rather than merely the surplus. This amount is different for everyone, but includes giving that brings about a positive spiritual change in you and that of your family.

Q. WHY DOES MY REQUEST LETTER ASK FOR A SPECIFIC GIFT AMOUNT?

A. In order to reach the necessary need of \$42.5 million, a gift amount is suggested for each household. Each household's financial situation and affinity to the Church is unique. Prayerful consideration of your pledge should be planned, proportionate and sacrificial. No judgment is made on the level of gift you or others will make.

Q. WHY ASK PARISHIONERS FOR DIFFERENT AMOUNTS? WOULDN'T DIVIDING THE PARISH GOAL BY THE NUMBER OF HOUSEHOLDS BE EASIER AND FAIRER?

A. It certainly would be easier. However, it definitely would not be fair, and would put a parish's ability to reach its goal at risk. A principle of this campaign is equal sacrifice, not equal giving. We all give to our parish at varying degrees. Parishioners will be offered the opportunity to participate in the **Centennial Campaign**, but not everyone will be able to participate at the same financial level in this Diocesan campaign. By asking for different amounts based on past giving and commitment to the parish, we challenge all to give as they are able and according to their blessings. In the process it helps to ensure the campaign's success.

Q. WHY EMPHASIZE PLEDGES?

A. The **Centennial Campaign** emphasizes pledging because it allows individuals and families the opportunity to consider larger commitments that they might not be able to consider through a one-time gift. Past experience shows that donors who pledge are able to consider gifts four to five times larger than those who make one-time gifts. This is important in a campaign of this magnitude.

Q. HOW CAN I BE SURE THAT MY PLEDGE TO THIS CAMPAIGN GOES TOWARDS THE COMPONENTS OUTLINED IN THE CASE FOR SUPPORT?

A. The Diocese has both a moral and legal obligation to restrict these funds for the stated elements. The funds raised for the campaign will be used exclusively for the named case elements. These funds are protected.

Q. WHY IS EACH DONOR ASKED TO COMPLETE A PLEDGE CARD?

A. A donor is asked to complete a pledge card so that the gift may be appropriately recorded and acknowledged by the Diocese. The most important information the Campaign Office requests is the total amount of the commitment, the amount of the initial payment (if any), the balance and the payment plan selected by the donor. Donors are asked to sign a pledge card as a good faith commitment, indicating that they have agreed to the terms of the gift indicated on the card. A pledge card is not a legally binding document.

Q. WHAT IF I AM UNABLE TO FULFILL MY ORIGINAL PLEDGE AMOUNT?

A. Understandably, unanticipated events or situations can occur. If for any reason your circumstances change, you may contact the Campaign Office to adjust your pledge to align with your new situation.

Q. WHY IS AN INITIAL PAYMENT REQUESTED? IS IT REQUIRED?

A. The **Centennial Campaign** asks for an initial payment to begin a pledge. It helps the campaign immediately by addressing the needs of our ministries. Many donors prefer to begin their pledges immediately; some may even give more than the requested 10%. However, an initial payment of 10% is not required, and a donor may elect to give less initially or delay the payment start date. Initial payment checks (and subsequent payments) should be made payable to the **Centennial Campaign**.

Q. HOW WILL INDIVIDUAL PLEDGE COMMITMENTS BE COLLECTED?

A. Individual pledge commitments and initial down payments will be collected at the parish level. All subsequent donations will be collected by the Campaign Office. Pledge reminders will be sent on a schedule of the donor's choosing by the Campaign Office. Credit card payments are also offered.

Q. ARE GIFTS TO THE CAMPAIGN TAX DEDUCTIBLE?

A. Yes, gifts to the campaign are tax deductible to the fullest extent allowed by law. The application of such laws varies with individual financial circumstances. Parishioners with specific questions regarding tax deductibility should contact their attorney or tax preparer.

