Diocese of Marquette
Stewardship & Development

Parish Planned Giving Program

But just as you excel in everything - in faith, in speech, in knowledge, in complete earnestness and in your love for us - see that you also excel in this grace of giving.

2 Cor 8: 7-9
This guide is designed to assist your parish’s advancement of planned giving. Contents are also posted at www.dioceseofmarquette.org/stewardshipresources and can be customized as needed.

The Stewardship Connection

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Sample Letter #1

Sample Letter #2

Department of Stewardship & Development

FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION, PLEASE CONTACT:
Department of Stewardship & Development
Diocese of Marquette, 1004 Harbor Hills Drive, Marquette, MI 49855
(906) 227-9108, or visit: www.dioceseofmarquette.org/stewardshipdevelopment
In their pastoral letter, Stewardship: A Disciple’s Response, the U.S. Catholic Bishops remind us that good disciples and stewards do the following:

“As Christian stewards, we receive God’s gifts gratefully, cultivate them responsibly, share them lovingly in justice with others, and return them with increase to the Lord.”

Each generation of Catholics is given an important mission: how do we pass on the faith to the next generation? Foremost is evangelization — knowing our faith well and sharing it with others. As important, is the careful and prayerful sharing of our God-given resources. One of those resources — our assets — includes the things we have accumulated over our lifetime.

As Catholic Christians, we believe that our assets and our ability to acquire them are gifts from a loving, generous God. We have a responsibility to use these gifts wisely and prudently — as well as to share them with others — our family certainly, but also with those institutions devoted to spreading God’s reign on earth.

For more information on parish stewardship please visit www.dioceseofmarquette.org/stewardshipresources
What is a “planned gift”? 

It is a gift given to a charity through a will, contract or trust. Planned Giving is charitable giving that is planned, often deferred, and usually spread out over an extended period of time.

Types and terminology

Popular examples include bequests of money, stocks, or tangible possessions; as well as life insurance policies and Charitable Gift Annuities. Additionally, there are the more complex trust entities – charitable remainder trusts and lead trusts.

- Will - legal document stating the disposition of a person’s property upon his/her death.
- Bequest - specific gift of property or assets included in a will.
- Life Benefit - proceeds from a life insurance policy’s face value payable to the beneficiary.
- Gift Annuity - Contract by which a donor transfers cash or property in exchange for income payments for life.
- Life Estate - donor gives home or land and retains rights to occupy or benefit from the property for life.
- Charitable Remainder Trust - a trust which returns income, fixed or variable, to the donor or others for life, or a period not to exceed 20 years.
- Charitable Lead Trust – a trust whereby the donor transfers assets/funds to a trust which, in turn, pays the charity for a certain period of time.

TENETS OF PLANNED GIVING

1. Planned giving is realized primarily through relationships, not the vehicles of giving.
2. Planned giving is the means to an end: focusing on the end facilitates the means.
3. There isn’t always a direct relationship between wealth and charity.
## PLANNED GIFTS – TYPES & BENEFITS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TYPE OF GIFT</th>
<th>BENEFIT TO CHURCH +</th>
<th>BENEFIT TO YOU</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bequest</td>
<td>Gift could be spent currently or invested to fund Church+ needs in perpetuity.</td>
<td>▪ Possible estate-tax deduction  ▪ Perpetual gift opportunity</td>
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<tr>
<td>Appreciated Stock</td>
<td>Shares will be sold; the full value of the assets will fund Church+ needs.</td>
<td>▪ Avoidance of capital gains tax  ▪ Income tax deduction for full market value on date of gift</td>
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<td>Insurance Policy</td>
<td>The Church+ receives full face value of the policy upon death of the donor, or may receive current surrender value prior to donor’s death.</td>
<td>▪ Income-tax deduction for value of the policy when transferred  ▪ Premium payments may be deducted as gifts</td>
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<tr>
<td>Real Estate with retained Life Estate</td>
<td>Proceeds from the sale of property is used for designated purposes to benefit the Church+.</td>
<td>▪ Use of property during your lifetime  ▪ Avoidance of capital gains tax  ▪ Immediate income tax deduction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Retirement Plan/IRA</td>
<td>Upon the death of the donor, remaining assets benefit the Church+.</td>
<td>▪ Estate and income tax savings for substantial portion of gift.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Charitable Gift Annuity</td>
<td>Assets that are not used to pay annuity to the donor or others, benefit the Church+.</td>
<td>▪ Guaranteed fixed income for life  ▪ Portion of income is tax-free  ▪ Potential tax deductions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Charitable Remainder Trust</td>
<td>Upon the death of the donor or last surviving income beneficiary, the remaining assets benefit the Church+.</td>
<td>▪ Variable or fixed income  ▪ Deferred income if desirable  ▪ Possible income and estate tax deductions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Charitable Lead Trust</td>
<td>Income for duration of Trust helps Church+ meet needs until the asset reverts to donor or other beneficiary.</td>
<td>▪ At end of trust period, principal returns to donor or other beneficiaries  ▪ Principal can pass to others with little or no shrinkage  ▪ Possible income and estate tax deductions</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

+ Church refers to any parish, catholic school, or ministry designated by the donor.
A Parish Bequest

A widowed parishioner would like to make a gift to her parish. She and her late husband were married in the parish and both their children were baptized and confirmed there. Sunday Mass and parish activities have been important to the whole family for many years. In addition, the pastor was very comforting to her when her husband died suddenly.

At the same time, she is concerned that she might need the money she has as she grows older. While she lives comfortably right now, she feels that it would be prudent to conserve her money. She wonders if her money would last if she had medical needs or wanted to help with the education of her grandchildren or needed a significant repair on her house.

A bequest would be a perfect way for her to make a gift to her parish. She left a specific amount of money to her parish in her will. If she did need the money for anything, she would have it and the bequest would only be paid if there were money left in her estate.

She is happy that she has made a gift and feels certain that there will be money there for the parish.

A Gift Annuity

A retired couple, both are 75 year old, is concerned that their investments don’t pay enough income to sustain their lifestyle.

As a result they cannot be as generous to the parish Offertory as they would like. The parish has been a source of life for them over the years and they would like to provide something for the parish when they die.

With a gift of $20,000 in exchange for a charitable gift annuity, they could receive a fixed annual annuity earning 6.3% (as of 2/01/09). They would also be entitled to a charitable income tax deduction in the current year, and on part of the income in future years.

The couple is tickled because their income has increased dramatically, they received a large charitable income tax deduction and they feel good that they are making a generous gift for the benefit of their parish.

What to do if parishioners want to leave money for Masses

From time to time, parishioners will want to leave money in their wills to have Masses celebrated for themselves and loved ones. The law of the Church is very concerned with ensuring that intentions for Masses are taken very seriously and that the Masses are celebrated. The actual language in bequests for Masses has implications not only for civil law, but also for canon law. It is important to note that while the Masses connected with a bequest will always be celebrated, there are occasions when the parish to which the money for the Masses was donated cannot celebrate the requested Masses so the money will go elsewhere.
We are challenged to recognize our God-given gifts of time, talent and treasure. We are also called to be good stewards of these gifts and to share them with others. Planned giving offers the faithful unique opportunities to carry on the Lord’s work.

The giving of our treasure that is planned and received by the means of a will, contract, or trust is a growing segment of charitable philanthropy. Our maturing population will continue to drive this trend as part of a significant transfer of wealth in our nation. Ever present is the strong motivation to give based on the spiritual and human need to help others, to leave a legacy, to memorialize a loved one, and very likely to secure tax benefits.

To the point of financial incentives, potentially large charitable deductions may be taken against the two major tax structures affecting this growing segment of Americans — income and capital gains tax, and gift and estate tax. Additionally, the direct advantages of income, gift and estate tax deductions arrived through the diverse range of planned giving vehicles often permit donors to consider even larger charitable gifts than they might have made.

Charitable planned giving provides a wonderful opportunity to show love and spiritual gratitude for your God-given gifts of treasure — the sharing of your blessings in a comprehensive and productive manner.

### DEVELOPING A CASE FOR SUPPORT

1. Identify and document the needs of your parish.
2. Identify programs and strategies designed to address the needs.
3. Establish the competence of the organization and its staff.
4. Explain who will benefit from the services made possible.
5. Identify the resources that are required to fund the programs.
6. Explain why the prospect should give.
7. How can the contributor give?
8. Respond to the unasked question in the prospect’s mind: What’s in it for me?
ORGANIZING YOUR PARISH EFFORT

1. Convene a small group of key leaders (4-6) who have a good understanding of your mission, needs and constituent groups. Where applicable, this group should include the pastor/pastoral administrator and any or all of the following: attorney, accountant, insurance agent, financial planner.

2. Arrange for a basic presentation on planned giving to this leadership group. Staff from the diocesan Development Office is available to assist.

3. Following the presentation, determine that there is sufficient commitment and interest among the group to move forward.

4. Develop a “mini-case” for support. The case should include your vision, compelling needs and plans to address these needs. A balance between rational and emotional messages, it should clearly answer the question: “Why should I generously support this ministry?” (see previous page)

5. Planning giving concepts are shared in key parish communication vehicles: homilies, bulletins, newsletters, web sites, year-end contribution statements, annual reports, and even as a “P.S.” on gift acknowledgement letters. Brochures on wills and planned giving are readily available in the pews, on display and/or at the back of the church. Lay testimony, targeted mailings, estate planning seminars and individual solicitation are most effective.

Advanced steps:

6. The leadership group brainstorms a confidential list of 15-25 donor prospects, age 60 and over, who are considered to be committed to the parish’s mission.

7. Members of the group personally contact the prospects to request visits using a similar message in asking for appointments:

- We’d like to consider a planned giving initiative for (our parish) that could have a profound impact on our future.
- I’m hoping we can get together so that I may personally share some ideas with you. Would you be willing to give me an hour or so of your time?

8. Conduct personal visits (one-on-one, or possibly two-on-one):
- Highlight the key points of the case statement and ask for reactions.
- Emphasis charitable bequests as a reflection of personal values and stewardship.
- Ask if he/she would consider including our parish in your will? Why or why not?
- Where appropriate, identify other planned giving options.

9. Follow-up all visits with an appropriated thank you letter, and additional information as requested.
It's too complicated for me. This guide was written to take away the complexity. Actually drafting legal documents can of course be very complicated, but you don't have to be involved in that part. Marketing planned giving is quite easy and involves doing what you are doing right now.

My parish is not wealthy enough to consider this. The most important predictor of planned giving success is how much people love the parish and the Church. It's hard to say exactly how wealthy someone is by observing their lifestyle, since many people live quite simply.

I have too many things I'm supposed to do now. How can I do more? Indeed, the role of pastor/pastoral administrator has many demands on your time. Therefore, this guide is designed to allow you to do planned giving with as little or as much of your personal involvement as is appropriate for you.

Won't this hurt my Offertory collection? It ought not to hurt your weekly collection. Planned giving is about a larger time frame than week-to-week and involves very different decisions. People on a fixed income may be relatively generous with assets they need during lifetime.

Why put this much effort into bequest when people can change their minds? People can change their minds, but statistics show they usually don't.

What happens if my parish gets closed? What will happen if someone has left us a bequest and we don't exist? The parishioner could leave funds in his/her will for the benefit of a particular parish, but specify that the funds could go to, for example, a successor parish or a specific ministry if the parish does not exist at the time the will is probated.

Our parishioners are very sophisticated. I'm sure most of them already know about these techniques. It's amazing how sophisticated people often don't know about these techniques. Remember that less than half of people have wills in the first place. In lots of cases, they are grateful to find out that there are ways they can give that help them with their taxes and their relationship with God.

I don't want to confuse or anger people by asking for something additional to what they are already doing. You can choose how understated or how aggressive you want to be in marketing planned giving to avoid any possible “push back.” It's important to keep in mind that planned giving is very different from Offertory collections or even capital campaigns. We're asking people to make us part of their family and include us in their wills. We're also offering them some significant tax incentives too, so planned giving doesn't usually confuse or anger people – particularly those who really love their parish and the Church.
Keeping Marygrove Retreat Center running and in good shape is a substantial challenge. It’s an old building, most of it from 1920 with an addition from 1960. So for the nine years I was in charge there, even the new part of the retreat center was older than me! The glorious old building has gone through several renovations over the decades. Thankfully, when I was assigned as the director in 2004, everything was in pretty good shape.

But that didn’t last. Before long, even with fastidious attention to cleaning and repair and lots of tender loving care, much of our treasured diocesan retreat center was deteriorating. Everything was worn and faded. So we embarked on a multi-year plan to renovate, refresh and update. During the nine years I was at Marygrove as director, we had four major renovations. And it wasn’t cheap. I do think we used the money well. We fixed plumbing, electrical and roof problems. We bought new mattresses and chairs. And nothing makes guests feel more comfortable than crisp new bedding, descent towels, new carpet and drapes, and a fresh coat of paint. Nothing flashy or showy; just good quality and comfortable.

We were able to complete all these needed improvements because of this one fact: four supporters remembered Marygrove in their wills. It’s as simple as that. Marygrove can’t charge enough for retreats to pay for renovations. Even with the unbelievable generosity of our annual contributors; it’s not enough to cover such costly capital improvements. And those four planned gifts didn’t come from wealthy people. By worldly standards, the contributions were not what you would consider enormous. But it was that extra we needed, at the moment we needed it. Such a blessing! As Jesus would say, it was like grain that spilled over the top of our container into the folds of our garments. I can easily say this today: without the generosity of planned giving, Marygrove would probably be in very bad shape today, because we simply would not have had the money to fix things.

In the case of each of our four Marygrove planned givers, they all loved the retreat center, and eagerly wanted to give. Planned giving gave them the opportunity to be generous. They wanted to be able to do something substantial as a reflection of the peace or encouragement in the faith they received while on retreat.

In July 2013, I left Marygrove to become the pastor of All Saints Parish in Gladstone, MI. I was not surprised to find that we have issues with our old buildings here too, along with many other financial challenges. Like Marygrove, I also find that there are many people here in our parish that long to be generous to the Church. They are eager to do something substantial as a reflection of the peace and encouragement they have found in their parish. Today, they may not be able to give, but they may choose to make provisions for the Church to receive support after they are gone.

As I embark on my third year as pastor, planned giving is being moved to the parish’s front burner. Our parish finance council has discussed the value of encouraging planned giving… There are many types of planned giving: designating property, insurance benefits, stocks, and outright monetary gifts from settled estates. In each case, it provides an avenue for people to be generous to the Church they love. At our parish, we’re looking at ways to integrate planned giving into all our reminders and appeals for financial support.

My experience at Marygrove proved it to me many times over: generous people cannot always give what they want during their lifetime. And when people make use of planned giving opportunities, they usually give the largest gifts of their lives. Encouraging planned giving in each parish is a tremendous opportunity. We could all use some extra grain spilling over into the folds of our garments from time-to-time!

- By Father James Ziminski

The information in this article is not intended as legal advice. Independent counsel is highly recommended.
1. **Do I need to make a will?**
   Every adult should have a will.

2. **If I already have a will, are there other factors to consider?**
   An existing will should be reviewed regularly to ensure that it meets all present needs and specific plans to manage and distribute your property. If your spouse or other heirs have died, you should have your plans reviewed by an experienced professional to determine the impact of these changes. Such a professional can also provide advice on the often changing federal and state laws that govern wills and estates.

3. **What happens if I move to or from another state?**
   As laws vary by state it is most important that your will be reviewed as soon as possible by a professional that resides in your new state of residency.

4. **What are the key benefits to estate planning?**
   As you work your way through important family and financial matters, remember that there are Planned Giving opportunities that could benefit you, while at the same time giving a benefit to others, whom you may wish to favor. Your estate may benefit significantly from the charitable deduction. Bear in mind, making a gift in your will demonstrates a profound sense of caring and a spirit of generosity. It also encourages a tradition of giving, a family philanthropy, which continues to future generations.

5. **How can I make a planned gift in my will to my parish or ministry?**
   The most common vehicle is a bequest in a will, in which you decide to remember the Church by setting aside a stated amount, a specific asset, or a percentage of your estate. The terms of the gift can be changed at any time by an amendment to your will.

6. **Are there other considerations?**
   Think of the opportunities a planned gift provides for memorializing a loved one. Donations can be made to the parish for general purposes or they can be designated to specific projects or programs. Please consider the future needs of your parish, Catholic school or a special ministry of the Church. Your actions now will make a difference and they will help to promote the mission of the Church for generations to come.

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**Planned Gift Policy**

The Diocese of Marquette and its entities will respect the wishes of any donor to the extent that they do not interfere with the mission of the Church. Funds designated or restricted to a particular area will be used for the specified purpose.

For more information, please refer to the Diocesan Gift Acceptance Policy.
THREE TYPES OF BEQUESTS

A bequest is a gift to your favorite parish, school or diocesan organization through your Will or Estate Plan. There are three types of bequests:

Specific

This is the most common type of bequest. Typically it is a dollar amount like $10,000 or some other specific asset like appreciated stock. Here is sample wording for a specific bequest:

“With gratitude for all that God has given me, I give, devise, and bequeath to _________ Parish {city}, {state} a/an {state} religious corporation, the sum of $_____________ (or description of specific property).”

Residuary

This type of bequest gives all or a specific percentage of assets remaining in the estate after debts, taxes, expenses and other bequests have been paid. Here is sample wording for a residuary bequest:

“With gratitude for all that God has given me, I give, devise and bequeath to _________ Parish, {city}, {state} a/an {state} religious corporation, 10% of the remainder of my estate after all debts, taxes, expenses and family bequests have been paid.”

Contingent

This bequest takes effect if those you have remembered in your Will are no longer living when you pass away. Here is sample wording for a contingent bequest:

“If upon the death of the survivor of my spouse and I, or at any time thereafter, but prior to complete distribution of my estate, there is no living descendant of mine, any property of my estate not vested or effectively appointed shall be distributed to: _________ Parish, {city}, {state}, a/an {state} religious corporation.”
Preparing an estate plan is good Christian stewardship - saying thanks to God, expressing your love for family, and showing charity toward others.

When your attorney prepares your estate planning documents, you can include your church as the final beneficiary to receive remaining benefits after other beneficiaries are remembered.

Proper estate planning can reduce administrative time, expense and inconvenience. Careful estate planning can also be one of the best gifts you give your family.

Good stewardship requires us to think of the future. Have your estate plan prepared now and express your good stewardship in ways that will bless your family and your church.

Who needs estate planning? Every adult who is legally competent, who owns anything and cares about who receives it at the time of his or her disability or death.

Grandpa didn’t have a will, but Grandma does. She had to settle Grandpa’s estate without one, and she now knows how important a will really is. Do you have a will?

Your gifts to your church are a testimony to your faith and the confidence you have in your church. Both lifetime gifts and testamentary (those that are given through your will) express your feelings in a meaningful way.

You can share your faith beyond your lifetime by careful estate planning that includes your church in your will. During your lifetime you will have the joy of knowing that whatever you do not use in this life will continue in ministry through your church after your death.

Have circumstances changed since you last updated your estate plan? Do your current estate planning documents carry out your commitments to your church?

“Later” can be too late. Don’t delay having your will drawn. Make sure your estate plans are in place so that your wishes will be carried out to benefit your family. Gifts you plan for your church through your will can help your church continue to minister and serve.

At the death of a special friend or relative you might like to remember that person through a memorial gift to your church. This will show your appreciation for this treasured relationship and help others through the church. An acknowledgment card will be sent to the surviving family, letting them know of your gift, without disclosing the amount.

How long has it been since you updated your will? Does it still express your wishes? Does it leave a gift to your church to carry on its ministry after your death?

**PLEASE REMEMBER THE CHURCH IN YOUR WILL.**

Visit [www.dioceseofmarquette.org/planmygift](http://www.dioceseofmarquette.org/planmygift) to learn more.
ADVERTISING SAMPLE #1

YOUR GIFT MATTERS!

† Make a plan with a purpose
† Use your resources wisely
† Create an enduring legacy

*Plan your gift today*

{YOUR PARISH LOGO, NAME & CONTACT INFORMATION HERE}

Fulfill your dreams of stewardship through an act of faith.

Visit: www.dioceseofmarquette.org/planmygift

To customize these ads for your parish contact the Diocesan Department of Stewardship & Development
Annuity Rate Increase!

With a Catholic Gift Annuity, you can secure the future for yourself and your loved ones, and give a lasting charitable gift.

Give to your parish, Catholic school or another favorite Diocesan program.

Call Terri to learn more 906-227-9108!
Visit dioceseofmarquette.org/planmygift

Benefits:
† Fixed annuity payments for life
† Immediate and future tax benefits
† A payment schedule tailored to meet your needs
† Knowing your gift will help Catholic in our diocese

Single Life; effective July 1, 2018

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*the minimum age is 55
PRINT ON YOUR PARISH LETTERHEAD

Targeted Parishioner’s Name  
Street Address  
City, State ZIP

Dear ______________,

Since its founding over _____ years ago, the mission of _______________ defines its essence. [insert mission statement]

Although each generation has faced its own unique challenges and opportunities in helping to fulfill this mission, one challenge —indeed duty— is shared by each generation: to faithfully hand on this mission, and to make it possible for the next generation.

In a very practical way, the future of _______________ is being built on, and will be sustained by planned giving — the intentional sharing of things we have accumulated over our lifetime. By doing so we make a profound statement that our commitment to _______________ was a significant priority during our lifetime. As a result, _______________ will continue to fulfill its mission into the future.

Thank you for prayerfully considering the information contained in this letter/packet/etc. May God bless you always for your gifts of treasure that will allow our ____________ legacy to be passed on for generations to come.

Sincerely,

Pastor / Pastoral Administrator
Targeted Parishioner’s Name
Street Address
City, State ZIP

Dear _______________,

I am writing to thank you for your long and continued membership in ________________ Parish. As faithful parishioners you have assisted in the Lord’s work by helping to build our faith community. Your stewardship of time, talent and treasure over the years is commendable and much appreciated.

I am also writing to ask you to take a look at some ways of extending your legacy so that the good work you have started/contributed to will continue for generations to come.

Enclosed is a brochure that summarizes the basics of Planned Giving and the key benefits of several types of gifts. This includes the most popular way — making a bequest in one’s will.

I hope that you find this information helpful. Please contact me (or ________________) at the parish office if you would like more information or would like to schedule a meeting at your convenience.

I ask that you prayerfully consider this stewardship opportunity to help advance the mission of our Church/Parish/School/Ministry.

Sincerely,

Pastor / Pastoral Administrator

P.S. If you have already included ________________ Parish, or any other diocesan entity, in your estate planning – thank you very much.
Our staff is available to:

† Make presentations to staff and leadership volunteers interested in promoting planned giving for the benefit of your parish.

† Provide resources on planned giving topics specific to a donor’s interest.

† Review solicitation materials and offer suggestions for consideration.

† Prepare charitable gift annuity illustrations and implement contracts.

† Help identify other professionals (attorneys, accountants, financial planners, etc.) willing to assist with estate planning and planned giving presentations to prospective donors.

FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION, PLEASE CONTACT:
Department of Stewardship & Development
Diocese of Marquette, 1004 Harbor Hills Drive, Marquette, MI 49855
(906) 227-9108, email tgadzinski@dioceseofmarquette.org
or visit: www.dioceseofmarquette.org/stewardshipdevelopment

The information in this publication is not intended as legal advice. Independent counsel with one’s attorney, accountant, tax consultant and financial planner is recommended.