



# WE ARE THE BODY OF CHRIST

Sharing our Gifts for the Church of Tomorrow

A Campaign to Support Parishes  
and Ministries in the Diocese of El Paso





## A LETTER FROM BISHOP SEITZ

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Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

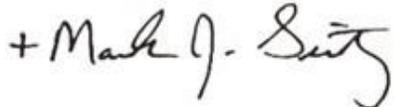
For 105 years, the Catholic Diocese of El Paso has served the proud people of El Paso, bringing service, prayer, and liturgy to the lives of many. Established by Pope Pius X on March 3, 1914, and throughout the years, the faith-filled traditions of our region and culture have shaped our dynamic Catholic community. Today, we remain a diverse, generous, and faithful Body of Christ, built on the commitment of our ancestors and the many proud people who call the Catholic Diocese of El Paso home.

As we look to 2019 and beyond, we choose to celebrate our past and look to the future. It is with great pride and conviction in our hearts that the Catholic Diocese of El Paso embarks on this Diocesan Capital Campaign - ***We Are the Body of Christ: Sharing Our Gifts for the Church of Tomorrow***. This important initiative will provide the necessary funds to support the men who are being educated and formed to become priests and deacons, strengthen our Catholic Schools and religious education programs, and nourish our communities and parishes.

I ask for you to reflect upon the many blessings and gifts you have received from God the Father's infinite mercy and generosity. We are called to be stewards of all we have been given, to use our gifts well, and to share what we have been given with others. By ensuring we can support our continuing and emerging needs, not only will we benefit from our partnership with one another, but also from the rich heritage of our ancestors; the faith-filled people who built our churches, parishes, and social programs that have enriched our lives.

Together, with Christ, there is no limit to the good we can and will achieve. I hope you will be inspired to join us as we ensure a bright future for the Catholic Diocese of El Paso. With my prayers and personal esteem, I remain,

Faithfully yours in Christ,



Most Reverend Mark J. Seitz, D.D.  
Bishop of El Paso



# WE ARE THE BODY OF CHRIST

## Campaign Overview



The Catholic Church has been present in west Texas for more than 300 years. Established in 1914, the Catholic Diocese of El Paso is a thriving and growing community of 56 parishes and 18 missions serving approximately 700,000 brothers and sisters in Christ. We also operate 8 grade schools and 3 high schools.

The Catholic Diocese of El Paso has seen many changes over the years, including this season of social-distancing. To ensure a strong future for our parishes, the Catholic Diocese of El Paso is kicking-off this diocesan-wide capital campaign – ***We Are the Body of Christ***. Through this initiative we hope to raise \$18 million to support priestly vocations and diaconate formation, provide financial assistance so more students can attend Catholic Schools, to invest in the education and training of our religious education teachers, and to strengthen our parishes. This is an ambitious goal, but one that is necessary if we are to carry out our mission to bring Christ to the world.

This campaign seeks to raise a minimum of \$18 million dollars over the next five years ensuring the Diocese can support:

**SEMINARIAN/DIACONATE EDUCATION & FORMATION**  
40%

**CATHOLIC EDUCATION & RELIGIOUS FORMATION**  
25%

**STRENGTHENING OUR PARISHES**  
20%

**PARISH EMERGENCY ASSISTANCE**  
15%



# CATHOLIC EDUCATION & RELIGIOUS FORMATION

Providing a full spectrum of formation opportunities, from childhood through young adulthood, will ensure we are preparing, cultivating and raising the next generation of disciples and leaders for our church.

## CATHOLIC SCHOOLS

Our Catholic schools teach the faith to over 2,700 children and youth. Ensuring that no student is ever turned away due to their family's inability to pay tuition is a top priority for the Catholic Diocese of El Paso. Funds will be direct for grants and scholarships, make upgrades, and purchase technology or other materials.

## FAITH FORMATION

Children and young adults across the Diocese are enrolled in parish religious education programs, and this number will continue to grow as the Catholic population does. Campaign funds will help parishes find new and creative approaches to faith formation, and acquire the resources needed to upgrade and enhance their religious education programs. Additionally, resources will be provided to invest in training and certification of volunteers to ensure that they are qualified to take on this task of passing on the faith.

**WE WILL INVEST \$5 MILLION IN CATHOLIC EDUCATION AND RELIGIOUS FORMATION.**



# SUPPORTING OUR SEMINARIANS AND DEACONS

Currently, 26 seminarians are discerning their vocation while preparing to serve as priests for the Catholic Diocese of El Paso. The priesthood is essential to our Catholic faith, and additional seminarians will be required in the coming years to meet the needs of our growing community. ***We Are the Body of Christ*** will direct funds to the seminarian endowment to encourage vocations, and to offset the cost of education and formation. Diaconate education and formation will also receive assistance.



Our seminarians are the future priests of the Diocese – priests who will help us grow our parishes, missions, and schools. Priests who will teach, provide the eucharist, hear confessions, baptize our children and grandchildren, and anoint us in our time of need. This will become a great opportunity to ensure that the Catholic Diocese of El Paso can continue to support our future priests.

**It costs about \$35,000-\$40,000 per year to education one seminarian, and most men study for 6-7 years.**



26 Men Currently in Formation



**\$1 Million**

Each year on seminary education

Further, we are all aware of the shortage of priests. Many priests in our Diocese are responsible for two or more parishes. One priest in our Diocese oversees 5 parishes. With fewer priests we must rely on our Deacons to help us meet the spiritual needs of our communities.

**WE WILL INVEST \$8 MILLION IN SEMINARY EDUCATION AND DIACONATE FORMATION.**

# FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE FOR OUR PARISHES

Our parishes and missions are the heart of our Diocese. It is where Catholics celebrate the sacraments, learn about and grow in faith, pass on and model their beliefs, and come together to serve their community.



## EXPANDING PARISHES

Population growth has stretched some parishes in this area beyond their ministerial and physical capacities. Knowing this is a reality we will continue to face for years to come, the ***We are the Body of Christ*** campaign will support the expansion of these parishes to accommodate new membership and ministries

## RURAL PARISHES

Crucial to our Catholic communities are our many parishes and missions in rural west Texas. Many are very small and may be the only parish for miles within their county. For these parishes, emergency costs may be too great to bear on their own. While these parishes may not have experienced the same growth, they must remain open. Through the generosity of our parishioners in this campaign, the diocese will be able to provide operational and emergency support for rural parishes.

## LOCAL PARISH NEEDS

Our local parishes have specific and unique needs also. By sharing diocesan funds with the parishes, we can achieve both the goals of the Diocese and the distinctive needs of the parishes – strengthening and bringing together our diocese as a whole.

**WE WILL SET ASIDE \$3 MILLION TO HELP PARISHES IN THESE SITUATIONS.**



## WAYS TO GIVE

The ***We Are the Body of Christ Campaign*** is a historic initiative for the people and parishes in the Diocese of El Paso, which will fund extraordinary projects and programs. Large or small, each sacrificial donation makes a real difference for our local Church. Below, you can learn about the various ways in which you can make a donation over the next five years.

### ELECTRONIC FUNDS TRANSFER

Decide to give through an automatic bank withdraw, credit card or debit card. This is the easiest and most cost effective way to give.

### CASH, CHECKS, & MONEY ORDERS

Receive periodic reminders with a self-addressed envelope in which you can place your donation.

### STOCK, MUTUAL FUNDS, & SECURITIES

Gifted stock, mutual funds, and securities are sold promptly upon reception.

### IRA DISTRIBUTION

Those over 70 1/2 or older with required minimum withdrawals can decide to donate their distribution to the ***We Are the Body of Christ Campaign*** and not have to pay income tax for said donation.

**"The point is this: whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and whoever sows bountifully[a] will also reap bountifully. Each one must give as he has decided in his heart, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver"**

**- 2 Corinthians 9:6-7**



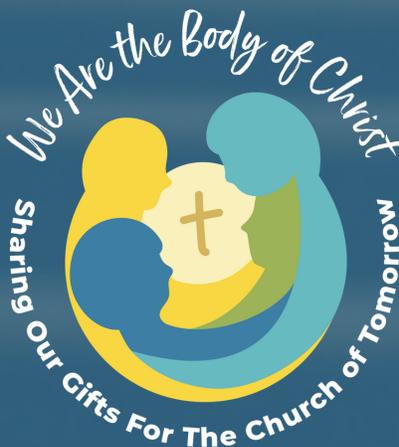
## CAMPAIGN PRAYER

O Lord our God, who revealed your love for us through the total self-giving of Jesus, your Son, and have made us sharers in that saving work through our Communion in His Body and Blood; grant that we might also reveal Christ's presence through our participation in the Capital Campaign of the Catholic Diocese of El Paso.

Through your love we truly are the Body of Christ. By sharing our gifts for the Church of tomorrow, allow us to lay down a legacy of Faith, making possible the preparation of men to serve you as priests, forming a generation of children who will come to know you better each day through their Catholic education, and building up parishes that will provide fitting homes for the work of the Church in the years to come.

Through the intercession of Our Lady of Guadalupe, move the hearts of those of great means and those with limited means that all may make a generous sacrifice in your name. Alone we can do nothing. But you can make fruitful our humble efforts so that together we can reveal your presence in this our border region so blest by your goodness.

Through Christ, our Lord. Amen



**CATHOLIC DIOCESE OF EL PASO**



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## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

**Q. Why emphasize face-to-face visits?**

**A.** Personal, face-to-face contact remains the single best way to ask for support. It emphasizes the personal nature of giving, allows a thorough presentation of the statement of need, gives potential donors the opportunity to ask questions and allows volunteers to express their enthusiasm. Personal visits also give us the opportunity for evangelization, for building up the Church and our community. By personally contacting our fellow parishioners, we can place a greater emphasis on stewardship by sharing our own faith experience and participation.

**Q. Who will participate in the *We Are the Body of Christ* campaign?**

**A.** All members of our community will be invited to participate in the *We Are the Body of Christ* campaign.

**Q. How will this campaign impact the parish offertory?**

**A.** Parish offertory is not expected to fluctuate during the *We Are the Body of Christ* campaign. Parishioners are asked to give above and beyond their regular offertory giving. Campaigns like *We Are the Body of Christ* can lead to increased offertory long-term. Parishioners may engage more deeply with the parish because of the campaign, and increase their offertory giving when their pledge payments conclude.

**Q. Why does my request letter ask for a specific gift amount?**

**A.** A gift amount is suggested for each household to reach the \$20M goal. Each household's financial situation is different. Please pray about a gift proportionate to your capability.

**Q. Why ask parishioners for different amounts? Isn't it easier and fair to divide the parish goal by the number of households?**

**A.** It certainly would be easier. However, it would not be fair and would hinder the parish reaching its goal. A principle of this campaign is each according to their blessings, equal sacrifice, not equal gifts. Gift requests are based on past giving to the parish. All parishioners will be asked to give to *We Are the Body of Christ*, but not everyone will be able to give at the same level.

**Q. Will my parish benefit from the *We Are the Body of Christ* campaign?**

**A.** All parishes benefit from shared ministries funded through the *We Are the Body of Christ* campaign. Also, parishes receive 20 percent of their parishioners' gifts up to the parish goal.

**Q. Why encourage pledges?**

**A.** *We Are the Body of Christ* encourages pledges to allow donors to give more than they could with one-time gifts. Donors who pledge usually make gifts four-to-five times larger than those who make one-time gifts.

**Q. How can I be sure my campaign gift goes towards the needs outlined in the case for support?**

**A.** The parish has a moral and legal obligation to restrict the use of campaign funds for the needs stated in the case for support. Funds raised in the campaign will be used only as described.

**Q. Why is each donor asked to complete a pledge card?**

**A.** Each donor is asked to complete a pledge card, so their gift will be appropriately recorded and acknowledged. The pledge card is an indication of good faith, an intent to meet the terms of the gift, and is not legally binding.



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## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (continuation)

**Q. How will pledges be collected?**

**A.** Completed pledge cards will be collected at the parish and sent in for accountability and processing. Credit card payments and automatic withdrawal payments from bank accounts (EFT) are highly encouraged. Electronic payments reduce costs and save resources, preserving funding for ministries. Pledge reminders will be mailed for payments by check.

**Q. Why is my pledge going to the Diocese and not the parish? Why make my check payable to *We Are the Body of Christ*?**

**A.** We are strategically combining our campaign *We Are the Body of Christ* and partnered with the Diocese to manage pledge fulfillment at no additional cost. This partnership ensures the parish will receive regular payments as pledges are fulfilled while the Diocese handles the associated operations, paperwork and correspondence for the parish.

**Q. Why request an initial payment? Is it required?**

**A.** *We Are the Body of Christ* asks for an initial payment to begin a pledge because it helps increase the cash reserves for the projects. Many donors prefer to begin their pledges immediately. Some will want to give more than the requested 10%. However, an initial payment of 10% is not required.

**Q. What if I am unable to fulfill my original pledge amount?**

**A.** Unanticipated events or situations can occur. If financial circumstances change, a donor may contact the Diocese to adjust, pause, or cancel their pledge.

**Q. To whom should checks be made payable?**

**A.** Checks for the campaign should be made payable to *We Are the Body of Christ*.

**Q. Are gifts of stock and planned gifts accepted?**

**A.** Donors may give appreciated securities, bequests and other deferred gifts. Donors considering such gifts should contact the diocesan Office of Stewardship and Development.

**Q. Are gifts to *We Are the Body of Christ* tax-deductible?**

**A.** All campaign gifts are tax-deductible to the extent permitted by law. Donors should consult a tax professional if they have any questions about the tax treatment of their contributions.

**Q. How was each parish goal established for the *We Are the Body of Christ* campaign?**

**A.** Each parish goal is 140% of the previous 2-year average offertory rounded to the nearest \$5,000.

**Q. Is the parish campaign goal an assessment?**

**A.** The parish campaign goal is not an assessment. Every parish is asked to make a good faith effort to implement the campaign according to the campaign plan.

**Q. How is *We Are the Body of Christ* different from the Annual Appeal (*Progress*)?**

**A.** The Annual Catholic Appeal (*Progress*) is a vital source of annual funding for many programs and ministries of the Diocese. The *We Are the Body of Christ* campaign seeks to raise funds for specific needs including: Seminarian and Diaconate Formation and Education, Catholic Schools and Religious Formation, and Parish emergency needs and expansion. Some campaign funds will be placed into permanent endowments to provide lasting sources of revenue for specific ministries.

# SUGGESTED GIVING PLANS



Pledges allow campaign donors to consider more substantial commitments than are possible with one-time cash gifts. Electric fund transfers, checks, stock and IRA distributions are some of the ways you can give. By making a gift of appreciated stock or IRA distributions, you may reduce or avoid capital gains. Please consult your tax professional

TOTAL GIFT	INITIAL 10% PAYMENT	REMAINDER	ANNUALLY	QUARTERLY	MONTHLY	MONTHLY W/O INITIAL PAYMENT
\$100,000	\$10,000	\$90,000	\$18,000	\$4,500	\$1,500	\$1,667
\$50,000	\$5,000	\$45,000	\$9,000	\$2,250	\$750	\$833
\$25,000	\$2,500	\$22,500	\$4,500	\$1,125	\$375	\$417
\$12,000	\$1,200	\$10,800	\$2,160	\$540	\$180	\$200

We ask, if possible, to consider making an initial payment with your pledge. The sooner we start collecting funds, the sooner we can start our projects. If you cannot make a 10% initial payment, please consider an initial payment equal to your first installment payment. All gifts are tax deductible to the extent provided by law and may be remitted monthly, quarterly, semi-annually or annually.