





# **2024 ACA COMMUNICATIONS MESSAGE:** *FOR THE LIFE OF THE WORLD*

As a guest speaker, you play a central role in inviting others to actively live their Catholic faith. Your presentation will inspire and motivate many people to support those in our community who rely on parishes, schools, and ministries in so many ways.

A special website has been created for the 2024 *Annual Catholic Appeal*. Invite people to visit **aca.archstl.org** to learn more about how the *Appeal* has impacted others. People can also use the QR code and Text-to-Give options that are on all materials.

Thank you for speaking on behalf of those who will benefit from the Appeal.

#### **YOUR TALK**

To ensure that all parishioners hear a unified message, we ask that you keep the following requests in mind as you compose your talk.

- **Pray** Say a prayer each time you open your workbook, rehearse or deliver your talk. Invoke the Holy Spirit and your patron saint or another saint to guide you.
- **Mention the 2024 focus** For the Life of the World.
- **No gift is too small** Every gift is appreciated.
- Mention the ACA website URL, Text-to-Give, and QR code In addition to the case statement, the Appeal has a special promotional sheet that features the campaign website (aca.archstl.org), the Text-to-Give information (Text "ACA" to 243725), and the QR code. If any of those materials are present in the pews, you can even encourage people to give right then during your talk.

#### THANK YOU FOR YOUR HELP WITH THIS IMPORTANT EFFORT!





Dear Guest Speaker,

Thank you for giving of your time and talent to participate in our Guest Speaker Program.

The Guest Speaker Program is one of the single most effective ways to reach out to St. Louis Catholics, asking for their support of the *Annual Catholic Appeal*. Your help with this program will assist the ministries fulfilling the mission of the Archdiocese of St. Louis, promoting the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Thank you for accepting this important responsibility.

#### THERE ARE FOUR SECTIONS IN THIS MANUAL

- 1. Coordinating with the parish
- 2. Preparing to write your talk
- 3. Writing your talk
- 4. Rehearsing your talk

If you are an accomplished, experienced public speaker, you will already know many of the things in this manual. We ask you to keep in mind that we are preparing this manual for people with different levels of experience.

#### FOUR CRUCIAL POINTS TO CONSIDER

- 1. Be brief (5 minutes at most)
- 2. Rehearse
- 3. Please do not read to the congregation
- 4. Speak loudly, clearly and from the heart

Following these four suggestions should greatly enhance your presentation.

We hope you find this manual to be helpful in preparing your speech. Should you have any questions or need any assistance, please contact the Office of Stewardship and the *Annual Catholic Appeal* at (314) 792-7680.

Gratefully,

## **Brian Niebrugge**

Executive Director
Office of Stewardship and the Annual Catholic Appeal





1. I am scheduled to speak the weekend of:

Before you prepare your talk, please call the pastor at your assigned parish. He is expecting your call. When you speak with him, introduce yourself and ask the following questions.

2.	What times are your Masses?			
3.	Shall I help set out or clean up pew brochures?			
4.	How early would you like me to arrive?			
5.	During what part of the Mass will I speak?			
6.	Where will the pledge cards be available after Mass on my assigned weekend? (Please ask for specifics.)			
7.	Will the case statement or the QR Code and Text-to-Give information be available in the pews? If so, would you like me to ask the parishioners to make a gift during my talk?			
8.	How is your parish most impacted by the Appeal? (Your packet will have a list of any direct support the parish receives. If your assigned parish receives this support, ask the pastor about it.)			
9.	How are you planning to ask people to give to the Appeal?			
10.	What aspect of the Appeal is most touching to your parishioners?			
11.	Is there anything else I should know that will help with this talk?			
12.	Is there any specific issue I should address?			





#### THERE ARE FOUR BASIC SECTIONS TO YOUR TALK:

#### 1. The Beginning

Personal story about the program you represent

#### 2. The Middle

- Direct and indirect impact of the Appeal in your assigned parish
- The overall impact of the Appeal on the archdiocese
- Scriptural reference

#### 3. The "Ask"

- Ask the congregation to support the Annual Catholic Appeal
- Let parishioners know how they can make a pledge

#### 4. The Ending

Say "thank you" to the pastor and congregation

In this section of the workbook, you will gather the information you wish to include in your talk. The following worksheets are designed to help you put this information together.

Experienced presenters may have their own methods of accomplishing this, but the attached notes may still be helpful. Please use whatever method works best for you.





# Personal Story About the Program You Represent

•	What is the most touching story you can think of in relation to your program?
•	Is there someone you work with who truly inspires you?
•	Write down specific stories or events that may have happened during the past year.
•	What has been your biggest challenge? How was it overcome?
•	What was your greatest success?
•	How many people do you serve?





# Impact of the Appeal in Your Assigned Parish

Your conversation with the pastor will assist you with this section. Refer to your notes from that conversation to answer the following questions.

•	packet from the Appeal Office will also share any direct support the parish received.)
•	programs supported by the <i>Appeal</i> most impact the parishioners at this parish? n programs do they care most deeply about?
	a list of some ways parishes benefit from the <i>Annual Catholic Appeal</i> indirectly. Check one at you may highlight during your talk.
	Support for Catholic educational programs, including schools and PSR programs
	Support for Catholic Charities
	Support for parishioners in need
	Support for the permanent diaconate
	Support for priest healthcare and retirement
	Support for the seminary—training future pastors
	Support for vocation programs—helping young people discern their calling
	Support for Marriage Prep Programs
	Support for Youth Ministry
	Support for Pro-Life Programs
	Support for parish food pantries
	Support for rural healthcare through the Rural Parish Health and Dental Clinics
	Training for parish catechists
	THE LIST GOES ON





# Impact of the *Appeal* on the Archdiocese

- Scan the list of programs below, which benefit from the *Appeal*. As you review the list, identify the programs that mean the most to you.
- For each program you select, write one or two notes about why that program is important to you, or make note of a personal story you can tell about that program.

SERVING OUR PARISHES DIRECTLY	SERVING THE PEOPLE, continued
Elementary School Assistance	Catholic St. Louis Magazine
Stewardship and Development Support for Parishes, Schools and Agencies	Catholic Renewal Center
Office of Peace and Justice	Elementary Teachers Educational Fund
Parish Emergency Assistance Fund	St. Charles Lwanga Center
Parish Food Pantries	
Basilica of St. Louis, King of France	SERVING THOSE IN NEED
Cathedral Basilica of St. Louis	Catholic Charities
Catriculal Dasilica Of St. LOUIS	Rural Parish Clinic
	The Care Service at Sts. Joachim & Ann
SERVING OUR YOUTH	Criminal Justice Ministry Immigrant and Refugee Ministry
Archdiocesan & Parochial High Schools	
Archdiocesan Seminary	Bridge of Hope Lincoln County
Vocation Programs	Rural Parish Workers
Newman Centers on College Campuses	Archbishop's Charity Fund
One Classroom	Messengers of Peace Mission Work
Religious Formation	Meals Program at Sts. Peter & Paul Church
Special Education	
Today and Tomorrow Educational Fund	<b>SERVING THOSE WHO SERVE US</b>
High School Stewardship Essay Program	Care for Active and Retired Priests
Office of Youth Ministry	Regina Cleri Priests Retirement Home Continuing Formation for Priests Permanent Diaconate Support for Religious Orders
Respect Life Apostolate	
Evangelization and Discipleship	
Adult Faith Formation	OTHER
Natural Family Planning	Annual Catholic Appeal Expenses
Hispanic Ministry	Reserve for Unpaid Pledges
Office of Racial Harmony	Archdiocesan Services
Catholic Deaf Ministry	Archidiocesari Services
ogram 1	
ogram 2	
ogram 3	



The addendum of this manual features the Scripture readings from all three *Annual Catholic Appeal* weekends, as well as reflections linking these Scripture readings to Stewardship or the *Annual Catholic Appeal*. Please find Scripture readings for the weekend you are scheduled to speak. Read the Scripture and the notes.

Use the space provided below to make your own notes, linking the Scripture from that day to the
Annual Catholic Appeal. As you make notes, keep them simple, short and easy to read.





The next step is to organize your notes and form them into a coherent talk.

Please remember the point of your speech is not to convey the history of your program. The point is to convince the congregation that the *Annual Catholic Appeal* supports worthwhile organizations—like yours.

#### THE STRUCTURE OF YOUR TALK

#### THE BEGINNING ... THE PERSONAL STORY

(USE PART 1 OF "PREPARING TO WRITE YOUR TALK")

- Your opening comments are the most crucial part of the whole speech. Make sure they carry impact.
- Do not begin talking about the weather, thanking the pastor for allowing you to talk or commenting on how beautiful the church may be.
- If you have a story you wish to tell about a specific person in your organization, begin by immediately telling that story.
- If you have been introduced by the celebrant, your congregation "gets it." They know who you are, what program you represent, what your function is —there is no need to explain any of that. Jump right in with your story!

#### THE MIDDLE ... THE TRANSITION

(USE PARTS 2, 3 AND 4 OF "PREPARING TO WRITE YOUR TALK")

- In this section, you will share how the *Appeal* impacts this parish, directly and indirectly. Use your notes from Part 2 of "Preparing to Write Your Talk" to write this section.
- This is where you touch on how the stories you told about your organization are happening
  in many programs. Tell a personal story about another program or tell of the good work you
  have seen other programs accomplish. Use your notes from Part 3 of "Preparing to Write
  Your Talk" to write this section.
- Finally, you will link the *Annual Catholic Appeal* to the day's Scripture readings. Use your notes from Part 4 of "Preparing to Write Your Talk" to write this section.

**CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE...** 



#### THE MOST IMPORTANT PART OF YOUR TALK ... THE "ASK"

- Be direct in asking the congregation to support the *Annual Catholic Appeal*. The "ask" is the reason you have graciously agreed to devote your Saturday evening and Sunday to the ACA. Please ask them to support the ACA and tell them specifically how they can do that. Remember to ask them to pray about their gift. All stewardship is closely tied to prayer.
- It is very important that the parishioners know exactly how they can make a pledge. Please
  be as specific as possible. For example, "Your pledge cards will be available in the St. Thomas
  Aquinas room just outside the main doors to the left. You may also make your gift online at
  aca.archstl.org."
- Include instructions on how people can use Text-to-Give (Text "ACA" to 243725) or the QR
  code to access online giving pages. You can even ask them to make their gift right then while
  you are talking.

#### THE ENDING ... THE "THANKS"

• Finally, please thank the pastor, the staff and, most importantly, the congregation for their time and attention. It is good to be brief.

# IF YOU FOLLOW THE STEPS PROVIDED, YOUR SPEECH MAY HAVE THE FOLLOWING STRUCTURE:

- Tell a specific, powerful, heart-warming story about a particular individual.
- Tell a second story (if time allows).
- Share the direct and indirect impact of the *Appeal* in this parish.
- Comment about other programs impacted by the *Appeal*. Refer to the pew brochures/case statements.
- Refer to the day's Scripture passages.
- Make the "ask." Be specific about where they can pledge, mentioning the pledge card, the
  website, Text-to-Give, and the QR code when appropriate. Remember to ask them to pray
  about their gift.
- Say "Thank you."





Even if you have been a guest speaker for many years, it is crucial that you rehearse your speech out loud several times. As you practice your talk, do so in the same manner and with the same detail and inflection that you will use when in front of the parish. In doing so, you will likely see ways to further improve your talk. Stand up, just as you would if you were in front of the parish.

Then give your talk out loud. Be sure to time yourself. Don't whisper the speech or just review it in your mind but really deliver the whole talk, using the same mannerisms that you would use in front of the parish. Make notes as you go if you find areas that could be improved. Then make the changes and try again.

When you are done, check your time. If you spoke longer than 5 minutes, it is time to start cutting some of your words out. No matter how brilliant the talk is, if you are longer than 5 minutes, people are going to miss what you are saying. Just keep cutting until your talk is under 5 minutes.

Another suggestion is to record your talk. When you go back to listen to yourself, especially if you wait a day or two, you may be surprised at where you can improve.

It may help to give the talk to a trusted friend who is willing to give you honest feedback.





Even if you are an experienced speaker, please read and use the suggestions given in this section. By giving this talk, you become the "face" of the *Appeal* for this parish. The impression that you give will impact ministries supported by the *Appeal* in this parish for years to come.

On the day of your talk, take the following steps. Make sure you arrive early enough to accomplish each task.

- 1. Arrive early.
- **2.** Help set out pew brochures/case statements.
- 3. Remember to pray before you talk.
- **4.** Go to the location where the pledge cards are set up. Thank the volunteers. The work they are doing at that moment is helping to fund your program.

It's effective to incorporate the names of the volunteers into your talk, if you can. By doing so, you affirm the importance of their work and highlight the commitment of specific parishioners to the *Appeal*.

This is especially effective in a smaller parish.

- **5.** After Mass, make yourself available to greet the parishioners as they leave church. This can be one of the most rewarding aspects of this program.
- **6.** Check in at the pledge card tables between Masses. Introduce yourself to any new volunteers and thank them.
- 7. After Mass, make it a point to thank the pastor and anyone else who was key in helping you that day.
- **8.** Help gather the pew brochures/case statements.
- **9.** As soon as you get home, sit down and write a brief, personal thank-you note to the pastor. Mail it Monday morning.

Thank you for your efforts. The Guest Speaker Program is one of the most important tools available for promoting the *Appeal*. Your gift of time and talent is helping our local Church fulfill its mission.





# **APRIL 20/21** Fourth Sunday of Easter **READING I**

#### **ACTS 4:8-12**

Peter, filled with the Holy Spirit, said:

"Leaders of the people and elders:

If we are being examined today

about a good deed done to a cripple,

namely, by what means he was saved,

then all of you and all the people of Israel should know

that it was in the name of Jesus Christ the Nazorean

whom you crucified, whom God raised from the dead;

in his name this man stands before you healed.

He is the stone rejected by you, the builders,

which has become the cornerstone.

There is no salvation through anyone else,

nor is there any other name under heaven

given to the human race by which we are to be saved."





# APRIL 20/21 Fourth Sunday of Easter

#### **READING II**

1 JOHN 3:1-2

Beloved:

See what love the Father has bestowed on us

that we may be called the children of God.

Yet so we are.

The reason the world does not know us

is that it did not know him.

Beloved, we are God's children now;

what we shall be has not yet been revealed.

We do know that when it is revealed we shall be like him,

for we shall see him as he is.





# **APRIL 20/21** Fourth Sunday of Easter

#### **GOSPEL**

**JOHN 10:11-18** 

Jesus said:

"I am the good shepherd.

A good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep.

A hired man, who is not a shepherd

and whose sheep are not his own,

sees a wolf coming and leaves the sheep and runs away,

and the wolf catches and scatters them.

This is because he works for pay and has no concern for the sheep.

I am the good shepherd,

and I know mine and mine know me,

just as the Father knows me and I know the Father;

and I will lay down my life for the sheep.

I have other sheep that do not belong to this fold.

These also I must lead, and they will hear my voice,

and there will be one flock, one shepherd.

This is why the Father loves me,

because I lay down my life in order to take it up again.

No one takes it from me, but I lay it down on my own.

I have power to lay it down, and power to take it up again.

This command I have received from my Father."





## **APRIL 20/21** Fourth Sunday of Easter

#### REFLECTIONS

Christ's love for each of one of us is boundless. We are each individually known, loved, and called.

The more we know Christ, the more we trust Him and love Him. His sacrifice on the cross For the Life of the World inspires us to make sacrifices of our own to follow Him.

In today's Gospel, Jesus tells us:

"I am the good shepherd, and I know mine and mine know me, just as the Father knows me and I know the Father; and I will lay down my life for the sheep. I have other sheep that do not belong to this fold. These also I must lead, and they will hear my voice, and there will be one flock, one shepherd."

Jn 10:14-16

The Good Shepherd wants all people to know Him, love Him, and follow Him. His words remind us of our evangelizing mission as His Church.

By virtue of our Baptism, each of us is called to be "a good shepherd" in our daily life: with our family, at work, at school, in our community. We are also called to share the joy of the Gospel with those who do not belong to the fold. Through acts of compassion and mercy, we make Christ's love present to our brothers and sisters.

Each year, the *Annual Catholic Appeal* allows us to come together as a family in Christ to make Him present throughout the Archdiocese of St. Louis and lead others to Him through life-giving ministries and programs. Our gifts become hope and healing for the most vulnerable and spread His love and mercy.

Please give to the *Appeal* <<date and place>> or visit **aca.archstl.org** to learn more about how you can continue to be Christ's hands and feet and share His Love *For the Life of the World*. You can also Text-to-Give by texting "**ACA**" to **243725**.





## **APRIL 27/28** Fifth Sunday of Easter

#### **READING I**

#### **ACTS 9:26-31**

When Saul arrived in Jerusalem he tried to join the disciples,

but they were all afraid of him,

not believing that he was a disciple.

Then Barnabas took charge of him and brought him to the apostles,

and he reported to them how he had seen the Lord,

and that he had spoken to him,

and how in Damascus he had spoken out boldly in the name of Jesus.

He moved about freely with them in Jerusalem,

and spoke out boldly in the name of the Lord.

He also spoke and debated with the Hellenists,

but they tried to kill him.

And when the brothers learned of this,

they took him down to Caesarea

and sent him on his way to Tarsus.

The church throughout all Judea, Galilee, and Samaria was at peace.

It was being built up and walked in the fear of the Lord,

and with the consolation of the Holy Spirit it grew in numbers.





# APRIL 27/28 Fifth Sunday of Easter

#### **READING II**

IJOHN 3:18-24

Children, let us love not in word or speech

but in deed and truth.

Now this is how we shall know that we belong to the truth

and reassure our hearts before him

in whatever our hearts condemn,

for God is greater than our hearts and knows everything.

Beloved, if our hearts do not condemn us,

we have confidence in God

and receive from him whatever we ask,

because we keep his commandments and do what pleases him.

And his commandment is this:

we should believe in the name of his Son, Jesus Christ,

and love one another just as he commanded us.

Those who keep his commandments remain in him, and he in them,

and the way we know that he remains in us

is from the Spirit he gave us.





# **APRIL 27/28** Fifth Sunday of Easter **GOSPEL**

#### **JOHN 15:1-8**

Jesus said to his disciples:

"I am the true vine, and my Father is the vine grower.

He takes away every branch in me that does not bear fruit,

and every one that does he prunes so that it bears more fruit.

You are already pruned because of the word that I spoke to you.

Remain in me, as I remain in you.

Just as a branch cannot bear fruit on its own

unless it remains on the vine,

so neither can you unless you remain in me.

I am the vine, you are the branches.

Whoever remains in me and I in him will bear much fruit,

because without me you can do nothing.

Anyone who does not remain in me

will be thrown out like a branch and wither;

people will gather them and throw them into a fire

and they will be burned.

If you remain in me and my words remain in you,

ask for whatever you want and it will be done for you.

By this is my Father glorified,

that you bear much fruit and become my disciples."





## **APRIL 27/28** Fifth Sunday of Easter

#### REFLECTIONS

We can always accomplish so much more when we do things together. We see this in so many different aspects of our lives, and it is also true in our Church. All the Lord's work that we carry out in our parish would not be possible without the commitment of our clergy and parishioners. In the same way, when we come together as an archdiocese in support of the Annual Catholic Appeal, we sustain vital ministries and services that transform lives in our communities.

In today's Gospel, Jesus is preparing the disciples for their mission and reminds them that they can do nothing without Him. As He often does, Jesus uses a parable.

#### He tells them:

"Just as a branch cannot bear fruit on its own unless it remains on the vine. so neither can you unless you remain in me. I am the vine, you are the branches. Whoever remains in me and I in him will bear much fruit, because without me you can do nothing." Jn 15: 4-5

Jesus is the true vine. The fruitful branches are those who remain in Him and follow His Word. In a vine, the fruit is grapes, and as Catholics, our fruit is living like Christ. When we remain in Him, our words and actions reflect His love and lead others to Him.

Jesus calls us each by name. One way that He calls us to action is through the Annual Catholic Appeal. Your gifts to the Appeal become hope and healing for the most vulnerable and spread His love and mercy, bearing greater fruit than we can even imagine.

Please give to the Appeal < <date and place >> or visit aca.archstl.org to learn more about how you can continue to be Christ's hands and feet and share His Love For the Life of the World. You can also Text-to-Give by texting "ACA" to 243725.





#### **READING I**

ACTS 10:25-26, 34-35, 44-48

When Peter entered, Cornelius met him and, falling at his feet, paid him homage.

Peter, however, raised him up, saying,

"Get up. I myself am also a human being."

Then Peter proceeded to speak and said,
"In truth, I see that God shows no partiality.
Rather, in every nation whoever fears him and acts uprightly is acceptable to him."

While Peter was still speaking these things,
the Holy Spirit fell upon all who were listening to the word.
The circumcised believers who had accompanied Peter
were astounded that the gift of the Holy Spirit
should have been poured out on the Gentiles also,
for they could hear them speaking in tongues and glorifying God.
Then Peter responded,
"Can anyone withhold the water for baptizing these people,
who have received the Holy Spirit even as we have?"
He ordered them to be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ.





#### **READING II**

1 JOHN 4:7-10

Beloved, let us love one another,

because love is of God;

everyone who loves is begotten by God and knows God.

Whoever is without love does not know God, for God is love.

In this way the love of God was revealed to us:

God sent his only Son into the world

so that we might have life through him.

In this is love:

not that we have loved God, but that he loved us

and sent his Son as expiation for our sins.



#### **GOSPEL**

#### **JOHN 15:9-17**

Jesus said to his disciples:

"As the Father loves me, so I also love you.

Remain in my love.

If you keep my commandments, you will remain in my love, just as I have kept my Father's commandments and remain in his love.

"I have told you this so that my joy may be in you

and your joy might be complete.

This is my commandment: love one another as I love you.

No one has greater love than this,

to lay down one's life for one's friends.

You are my friends if you do what I command you.

I no longer call you slaves,

because a slave does not know what his master is doing.

I have called you friends,

because I have told you everything I have heard from my Father.

It was not you who chose me, but I who chose you

and appointed you to go and bear fruit that will remain,

so that whatever you ask the Father in my name he may give you.

This I command you: love one another."





#### REFLECTIONS

"Love" is the essential word in today's readings.

The second reading from the first letter of John tells us "God is love" (1 Jn 4:8) and proclaims that this love was revealed to us in that "God sent his only Son into the world so that we might have life through him" (1 Jn 4:9).

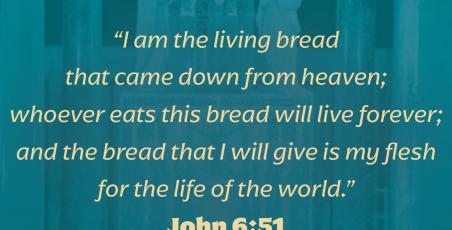
Then, in the Gospel, Jesus says to His disciples: "As the Father loves me, so I also love you" (*Jn 15:9*). The Father's love for Christ is the foundation for Jesus' love for His disciples and the love that He asks of the disciples when he commands them: "love one another as I love you. No one has greater love than this, to lay down one's life for one's friends" (*Jn 15:12-13*).

Jesus continues, saying: "It was not you who chose me, but I who chose you and appointed you to go and bear fruit that will remain" (*Jn 15:16*).

By virtue of our Baptism, we too have been chosen. The Lord calls each of us by name. When we truly recognize God's infinite love for us, and His sacrifice *For the Life of the World*, it is the source of our joy and hope and must shine through in our love for one another.

Each year, the *Annual Catholic Appeal* allows us to come together as a family in Christ to make His love present throughout the Archdiocese of St. Louis and lead others to Him through life-giving ministries and programs. Our gifts become hope and healing for the most vulnerable and spread His love and mercy, bearing greater fruit than we can even imagine.

Please give to the *Appeal* < <date and place >> or visit **aca.archstl.org** to learn more about how you can continue to be Christ's hands and feet and share His Love *For the Life of the World*. You can also Text-to-Give by texting "**ACA**" to **243725**.



John 6:51



ARCHDIOCESE OF ST. LOUIS

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