



FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Catholic Ministries Appeal 2024-2025

What is the Catholic Ministries Appeal (CMA)?

Begun more than forty years ago in 1981-1982 as the “Thanks Giving Appeal,” the purpose of the CMA is to raise money to support diocesan-wide ministries and outreach. The fund was renamed in 2006 to better reflect the appeal’s intent: helping to support crucial outreach and ministries of the Roman Catholic Diocese of Rochester and the mission of each of our parishes.

How is my contribution to the CMA used?

The CMA funds 7 specific categories of allocation. The bullets under each category provide examples of specific ministries, services and programs funded through each allocation:

1. Providing diocesan-wide services to our parishes and institutions

- Welcoming new Catholics through special education programs (RCIA)
- Giving support to families, the elderly and the sick through chaplains to nursing homes, hospitals, jails, and prisons
- Tools and resources for Creating a Safe Environment in the parishes and through the Diocese.
- Honoring marriage and preparing engaged couples
- Multicultural/Urban/Rural ministries
- Support for Respect Life and Life Issues and programs to honor life from conception to natural death
- Spreading the Gospel through communications media
- Providing parishes with needed services and support such as human resource services, Information Technology services and support, support of Finance Directors and Finance Councils
- Building & Property Management
- Tribunal services
- Diocesan Archives
- Pastoral Planning
- Stewardship resources

2. *Educating our young in the Catholic Faith*
 - Providing support and resources for parish faith formation programs for youth
 - Assistance and resources for sacramental preparation
 - Assisting Catholic schools
 - CYO
 - Recognition of youth leaders and ministers through the Hands of Christ Award
 - Young adult ministries
 - Support of campus ministry programs at colleges and universities across the 12 counties of the Diocese
 - Organization for attendance at the National Catholic Youth Conference

3. *Serving people in need through Catholic Charities*
 - Reaching out to the poor, the homeless, the hungry, and the most vulnerable in our community

4. *Supporting Seminarians, Deacons, Pastoral Leaders & Vocations*
 - Seminarian education
 - Education of the diaconate through St. Bernard's School of Theology and Ministry
 - Education and professional development of pastoral leaders
 - Encouraging and promoting religious vocations

5. *Funding the Ministries of our Pope and Bishop*
 - The Office of the Bishop
 - Support of advisory and lay councils to the Bishop
 - Supporting Vatican ministries
 - Teaming with other dioceses in New York State and the USA

6. *Funding Operations & Support Services*
 - Operation of diocesan offices/ministries in the Pastoral Center, including maintenance and capital improvements

7. *Supporting the CMA Campaign*
 - Funding to develop and execute fundraising efforts and campaign materials
 - Staff
 - Gift and data processing

In terms of impact, when you give to the CMA, you are really giving to the eager children hungry to learn about the faith of their parents and generations of Catholics. You are giving to the dedicated young seminarian learning to serve God and the Church. You are giving to help the Vatican in its work in the world and to the bishops for ministries that span our nation. Your money goes to help the vital work of Catholic Charities, to families just like yours whose faith sees them through the ever-growing stress of life. And you give "locally" - more than half of every dollar raised returns to your parish in the form of services and programming that your parish would have a difficult time providing on its own. By giving to the CMA, you are

supporting your parish. The CMA provides funding for services and programs provided to your parish that would be difficult to fund on its own. Examples of these services include:

- Tools and resources for Creating a Safe Environment
- Human Resource Services: Recruiting, hiring, and providing orientation to parish staff; retirement services; healthcare benefits, medical and other insurance processing
- Technology Support: The diocesan Information Technology Services (ITS) Helpdesk supports all parishes in their technology needs
- The diocesan Website includes online tools and resources, including the Learning Management System, to support parish ministries, programs and training of staff and volunteers
- Support to Finance Councils and Pastoral Councils with educational materials, policy and procedures, and other online resources that assist in planning and execution of parish management
- Support to Parishes for religious education, Faith Formation and sacramental preparation for children, youth, and young adults
- Tribunal/Archives
- Communications and News Media Relations
- Stewardship resources, above and beyond the CMA through programs that promote stewardship efforts in the parishes, and a clearinghouse for securities/stock transfers to help parishioners make stock gifts to their parishes
- Costs associated with the Diocesan Census

Additionally, the Diocese is able obtain lower rates on insurance, benefits, utilities, and other services based on economies of scale for all parishes, that stand-alone congregations would not be able to negotiate.

Why did the Diocese decide to increase the CMA goal for 2024-2025?

The overall goal for the 2024-2025 CMA will be \$6,925,00, a 3% increase over last year's CMA goal. This is the first increase in the overall CMA goal in six years.

This reasonable increase in the overall goal will allow the Diocese offset inflationary increases and continue to provide a solid level of services to the parishes, Catholic Charities, Ministries to Youth and Young Adults (Faith Formation, Catholic Schools, Campus Ministry, CYO etc.), Seminarian and Deacon education, and other CMA funded programs. It is important to remember that the CMA covers more than one-half of the diocesan budget, not the entire diocesan budget. In order to continue CMA funding to parishes and other institutions, the Diocese has had to reduce the amount of funds available for other areas not directly supported by CMA funding.

How will the increase in the CMA goal impact the goal of my parish?

Since 2006-2007, the CMA has operated under a system in which goals are set for individual parishes using a formula based on parish demographics (number of households, Mass attendance, parish collections, and median income of parishioners) developed by the Center for Governmental Research. This system has proven to be a fair, equitable and objective way of engaging parishes to contribute to the operation of the diocesan church, and to collectively share the cost of services provided by the Diocese to the parishes.

Because the formula is based on parish demographics that are proportional in relationship to the overall demographics for the Diocese, each parish's CMA goal will be impacted differently. Some parishes will see an increase in their CMA goal, with others will see a decrease. If demographic factors such as Mass attendance and parish collections are on the upswing, those parishes will likely see an increase in their CMA goal.

Why do parishes pay the shortfall if they don't raise their CMA goal?

The Diocese of Rochester is among a handful of dioceses in the United States that do not have a formal *cathedraticum*, an annual diocesan tax on all parishes; many dioceses have both an annual appeal and a *cathedraticum*. Like many other of our sister dioceses that conduct annual appeals, goals are established to ensure we can adequately and accurately plan for and fund the many charitable ministries and vital services to parishes throughout our 12-county Diocese.

Are funds raised through the annual Catholic Ministries Appeal used to pay for settlement costs associated with abuse?

No. All monies raised in the CMA are only used for the programs, services, and ministries for which they are designated. No gifts to the CMA are used to satisfy settlement costs associated with abuse.

I am hesitant to give to a "bankrupt" organization. Why should I?

Your contributions provide funding to operate crucial ministries for people of all walks of life. While the Diocese reorganizes, these needs continue and can only be met with the financial support of the faithful.

From the very beginnings of the faith and the early ministry of Our Lord, our church has depended on the faithful to provide their time and energy, skills, and gifts in building the Kingdom of God. Without financial support, we could not continue the mission of the Church. The Body of Christ's only real means of support is through the generosity of its members.