



**2026 BECAUSE WE ARE CATHOLIC
ANNUAL APPEAL
PARISH RESOURCE MANUAL**

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction

Letter from Stewardship and Development

Case for Support

Program Materials

Because We Are Catholic Annual Appeal Timeline

Bulletin and Pulpit Announcements

Petitions to be Included in the Prayer of the Faithful

Parish Committee

Because We Are Catholic Annual Appeal Participation

Additional Because We Are Catholic Annual Appeal Materials

Bulletin Inserts



April 2026

Dear Pastor, Parish Staff, and Dedicated Volunteers,

On behalf of the entire Diocesan family, I want to share my sincere gratitude for your incredible leadership during last year's Because We Are Catholic Annual Appeal. Your hard work helped us raise over \$3.8 million, which directly supports our Catholic Schools, Catholic Charities, Retired and Infirm Priests, Holy Family Senior Living and essential ministries across our five counties,

As Bishop Schlert has shared, this Appeal is a true partnership. It is a collective, pastor-led effort that brings our entire community together. This year, our goal is to raise \$3.7 million to continue providing for our retired priests, vocations, and vital parish ministries. We know how much you already do, and we are here to walk alongside you to make this year's appeal a success in your parish.

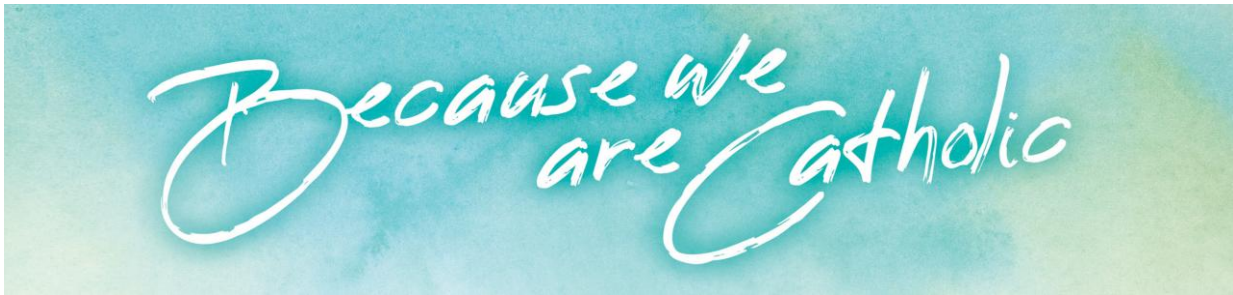
To help you plan, our campaign timeline began with a pre-campaign mailing to past donors. The official kick-off will reach mailboxes the week of April 13, with additional mailings and email updates scheduled for June, September, and December.

We want to make this process as smooth as possible for you. You can find a full program schedule and helpful marketing materials in the 2026 Appeal Manual. Please remember that the Office of Stewardship & Development is always here to help—don't hesitate to reach out if you need anything at all.

Thank you for your support of the Appeal and for everything you do for your parishioners. I feel truly grateful for our partnership.

With gratitude,

Michele Mullikin
Executive Director
Stewardship and Development



ANNUAL APPEAL TIMELINE 2026

February 2026

- February 9 (week of) – **Pre-Ask Mailing Sent to Donors**

April 2026

- April 1 – Christ Mass – **Parish Kit Pick-up**
- April 12/13
 - Bulletin & Pulpit Announcements
- April 13 (week of) – **Phase 1 Mail Drop**
- April 18/19
 - **Because We are Catholic Kicks Off in Parishes**
 - **Lay Witness Weekend (Deacons)**
 - Bulletin & Pulpit Announcements
- April 25/26
 - **Lay Witness Weekend (Seminarians & Lay People)**
 - Bulletin & Pulpit Announcements
- April 25 – **Bishop Scholar Awards – Notre Dame High School**

May 2026

- May 2/3
 - **Commitment Weekend**
 - Bulletin & Pulpit Announcements
- May 9/10, 16/17, 23/24, 30/31
 - Bulletin & Pulpit Announcements
 - Bulletin Insert

June 2026

- June 6/7, 13/14
 - Bulletin & Pulpit Announcements
 - Bulletin Insert
- June 15 – **Phase 2 Mail Drop**

August 2026

- August 24 (week of) – **Phase 3 Mail Drop**

November 2026

- November 27 – **Phase 4 Mail Drop**

DAILY MASS WITH BISHOP SCHLERT

- ❖ Tuesday, May 19 – 6:30 pm – St. Benedict, 2020 Chestnut Hill, Rd, Mohnton
- ❖ Thursday, September 3 – 8:00 am – Holy Trinity, 4456 Main Street, Whitehall
- ❖ Wednesday, September 9 – 6:00 pm – St. Peter the Fisherman, 33 Trinity Circle Rd, Lake Harmony
- ❖ Wednesday, September 16 – 8:00 am – Our Lady of Perpetual Help, 3219 Santee Rd, Bethlehem
- ❖ Thursday, September 17 – 8:00 am – Holy Family Parish,
St. Michael the Archangel Church, 539 Sunbury St., Minersville

BULLETIN AND PULPIT ANNOUNCEMENTS

**April 18 & 19
Kickoff Weekend**

FROM THE PASTOR'S DESK

(Pastors: Please feel free to modify this note as you deem appropriate.)

Dear Parishioners,

This weekend, we kick off the 2026 *Because We Are Catholic* Annual Appeal. This year holds a special significance as we celebrate the 65th Anniversary of our Diocese—a true Jubilee Year of Grace.

I want to begin by offering my sincere thanks for the remarkable generosity you have shown in the past. As your pastor, I am constantly moved by how you live out your faith through your stewardship.

Bishop Schlert has dedicated this year as a “Eucharistic and Marian Year,” a time to give thanks for our many blessings while imploring new graces for the future of our local Church. Our Appeal is the heartbeat of this mission. It allows us to bring the Light of Christ to our neighbors in Berks, Carbon, Lehigh, Northampton, and Schuylkill Counties.

When you support the Appeal, you are personally feeding the hungry, welcoming students of all abilities into our schools, and walking alongside young couples as they prepare for marriage.

Our parish goal this year is \$_____. I am prayerfully asking you to join me in making a gift to help us reach this mark. My hope is for 100% participation; remember, no gift is too small when given with a grateful heart.

We truly are stronger together. Through our collective sacrifice, we ensure that the mercy of God reaches every corner of our Diocese.

To make your gift, please return the pledge form you received in the mail, visit BecauseWeAreCatholic.org, or call the Appeal Office at 800-831-4443.

May this Jubilee Year be a time of great renewal for you and your families.

Peace and blessings,
<Pastor's Name>

April 25 & 26 Lay Witness Speaker Weekend

Bulletin Insert – Community Services

Bulletin Announcement

Because We Are Catholic Annual Appeal Bulletin Announcement



The 2026 **Because We Are Catholic Annual Appeal** is underway! Our parish support is a vital part of this Diocesan-wide effort to serve children and families in our own community and throughout the Diocese of Allentown. You can scan the QR code and make your gift today at www.BecauseWeAreCatholic.org. Thank you!

Anuncio para el boletín de la Campaña Anual Porque Somos Católicos



¡La Campaña Anual 2026 **Porque Somos Católicos** ya está en marcha! Nuestro apoyo parroquial es una parte vital de este esfuerzo diocesano para servir a los niños y a las familias en nuestra propia comunidad y a lo largo de toda la Diócesis de Allentown. Pueden escanear el código QR y hacer su donación hoy en www.BecauseWeAreCatholic.org. ¡Gracias!

Pulpit Announcement

Many thanks to those who have made a commitment to the *Because We Are Catholic Annual Appeal*. If you have not done so already, please bring your pledge form to Mass next weekend. The participation of all our parish families makes it possible to serve those in need. Remember every gift counts, no matter how big or small. Please see the bulletin for details.

Anuncio desde el púlpito

Muchas gracias a quienes se han comprometido con la Campaña Anual Porque Somos Católicos. Si aún no lo han hecho, traigan su formulario de compromiso a la misa el próximo fin de semana. La participación de todas nuestras familias parroquiales hace posible servir a quienes lo necesitan. Recuerden que cada donativo cuenta, sin importar cuán grande o pequeño sea. Por favor, consulten el boletín para más detalles.

May 3 & 4 Commitment Weekend

Bulletin Insert – Catholic Education

Bulletin Announcement

Because We Are Catholic Annual Appeal Bulletin Announcement



The 2026 **Because We Are Catholic Annual Appeal** is underway! Our parish support is a vital part of this Diocesan-wide effort to serve children and families in our own community and throughout the Diocese of Allentown. You can scan the QR code and make your gift today at www.BecauseWeAreCatholic.org. Thank you!

Anuncio para el boletín de la Campaña Anual Porque Somos Católicos



¡La Campaña Anual 2026 **Porque Somos Católicos** ya está en marcha! Nuestro apoyo parroquial es una parte vital de este esfuerzo diocesano para servir a los niños y a las familias en nuestra propia comunidad y a lo largo de toda la Diócesis de Allentown. Pueden escanear el código QR y hacer su donación hoy en www.BecauseWeAreCatholic.org. ¡Gracias!

Pulpit Announcement

Many thanks to those who have made a commitment to the *Because We Are Catholic Annual Appeal*. If you have not done so already, please bring your pledge form to Mass next weekend. The participation of all our parish families makes it possible to serve those in need. Remember every gift counts, no matter how big or small. Please see the bulletin for details.

Anuncio desde el púlpito

Muchas gracias a quienes se han comprometido con la Campaña Anual Porque Somos Católicos. Si aún no lo han hecho, traigan su formulario de compromiso a la misa el próximo fin de semana. La participación de todas nuestras familias parroquiales hace posible servir a quienes lo necesitan. Recuerden que cada donativo cuenta, sin importar cuán grande o pequeño sea. Por favor, consulten el boletín para más detalles.

May 3 & 4
Commitment Weekend

FROM THE PASTOR'S DESK

(Pastors: Please feel free to modify this note as you deem appropriate.)

Dear Friends,

Over the past few weeks, we've shared the 2026 Because We Are Catholic Annual Appeal, and I want to sincerely thank you for your attention and interest.

I recognize the many obligations your families face, but as your Pastor, I fully support this mission. Each year, this Appeal allows us to serve, educate, and care for the marginalized—living out our call to be a Roman Catholic Family of Faith. Your contributions directly support our seminarians, retired priests, and vital ministries that bring the Light of Christ to our community.

I am confident that with everyone's participation, we will continue Christ's work on earth. Please take a moment to prayerfully consider making a commitment today using a pledge envelope. If you have already given, thank you for your generosity. In a few moments, the ushers will come by to collect the envelopes.

With gratitude,

<Pastor's Name>

May 9 & 10; 16 & 17; 30 & 31

Bulletin Insert –

Parish Life (May 9 & 10)

Vocations (May 16 & 17)

Bulletin Announcement

Because We Are Catholic Annual Appeal Bulletin Announcement



The 2026 **Because We Are Catholic Annual Appeal** is underway! Our parish support is a vital part of this Diocesan-wide effort to serve children and families in our own community and throughout the Diocese of Allentown. You can scan the QR code and make your gift today at www.BecauseWeAreCatholic.org. Thank you!

Anuncio para el boletín de la Campaña Anual Porque Somos Católicos



¡La Campaña Anual 2026 **Porque Somos Católicos** ya está en marcha! Nuestro apoyo parroquial es una parte vital de este esfuerzo diocesano para servir a los niños y a las familias en nuestra propia comunidad y a lo largo de toda la Diócesis de Allentown. Pueden escanear el código QR y hacer su donación hoy en www.BecauseWeAreCatholic.org. ¡Gracias!

OR

BECAUSE WE ARE CATHOLIC ANNUAL APPEAL

Many thanks to those who have made a pledge to the *Because We Are Catholic Annual Appeal*. Making a six-month pledge to the Appeal allows you to maximize the amount that you may give by making monthly payments. For example, a \$120 gift to the Appeal may be set up with six \$20 installments. Remember, every gift counts, no matter how big or small. Your generosity supports children and families in our own community and throughout the Diocese of Allentown. You can make your gift online at www.BecauseWeAreCatholic.org.

CAMPAÑA ANUAL PORQUE SOMOS CATÓLICOS

Muchas gracias a quienes se han comprometido con la Campaña Anual *Porque Somos Católicos*. Hacer una contribución de seis meses a la Campaña permite maximizar la cantidad que pueden donar al hacerlo mediante pagos mensuales. Por ejemplo, una donación de \$120 para la Campaña se puede dividir en seis cuotas de \$20. Recuerden que cada donativo cuenta, sin importar cuán grande o pequeño sea. Su generosidad apoya a los niños y las familias de nuestra propia comunidad y de toda la Diócesis de Allentown. Pueden hacer su donación en línea en www.BecauseWeAreCatholic.org.

May 23 & 24 Memorial Day Weekend

Bulletin Announcement



The 2026 **Because We Are Catholic Annual Appeal** is underway! Our parish support is a vital part of this Diocesan-wide effort to serve children and families in our own community and throughout the Diocese of Allentown. You can scan the QR code and make your gift today at www.BecauseWeAreCatholic.org. Thank you!

Anuncio para el boletín de la Campaña Anual Porque Somos Católicos



¡La Campaña Anual 2026 **Porque Somos Católicos** ya está en marcha! Nuestro apoyo parroquial es una parte vital de este esfuerzo diocesano para servir a los niños y a las familias en nuestra propia comunidad y a lo largo de toda la Diócesis de Allentown. Pueden escanear el código QR y hacer su donación hoy en www.BecauseWeAreCatholic.org. ¡Gracias!

Pulpit Announcement

Many thanks to those who have made a commitment to the *Because We Are Catholic Annual Appeal*. If you have not done so already, please bring your pledge form to Mass next weekend. The participation of all our parish families makes it possible to serve those in need. Remember every gift counts, no matter how big or small. Please see the bulletin for details.

Anuncio desde el púlpito

Muchas gracias a quienes se han comprometido con la Campaña Anual *Porque Somos Católicos*. Si aún no lo han hecho, traigan su formulario de compromiso a la misa el próximo fin de semana. La participación de todas nuestras familias parroquiales hace posible servir a quienes lo necesitan. Recuerden que cada donativo cuenta, sin importar cuán grande o pequeño sea. Por favor, consulten el boletín para más detalles.

June

Bulletin Announcements

Because We Are Catholic Annual Appeal Bulletin Announcement



The 2026 **Because We Are Catholic Annual Appeal** is underway! Our parish support is a vital part of this Diocesan-wide effort to serve children and families in our own community and throughout the Diocese of Allentown. You can scan the QR code and make your gift today at www.BecauseWeAreCatholic.org. Thank you!

Anuncio para el boletín de la Campaña Anual Porque Somos Católicos



¡La Campaña Anual 2026 **Porque Somos Católicos** ya está en marcha! Nuestro apoyo parroquial es una parte vital de este esfuerzo diocesano para servir a los niños y a las familias en nuestra propia comunidad y a lo largo de toda la Diócesis de Allentown. Pueden escanear el código QR y hacer su donación hoy en www.BecauseWeAreCatholic.org. ¡Gracias!

Or

Bulletin Announcements

As of today, _____ (parish name) parishioners have contributed \$ _____ to the 2026 Because We Are Catholic Annual Appeal. This represents _____% of our total number of registered families. With 100% participation, we can make a major impact on the lives of friends, families, and neighbors in need. If you have not made your pledge of support, you may return your pledge form to the parish office or make your gift online. Remember, every gift counts, no gift is too small. Every dollar helps those in need. If you have any questions or would like to make a gift, please call the parish office or visit the Appeal website at www.BecauseWeAreCatholic.org

Al día de hoy, los feligreses de _____ (nombre de la parroquia) han contribuido con la cantidad de \$ _____ a la Campaña Anual 2026 *Porque Somos Católicos*. Esto representa el _____% de nuestro número total de familias registradas. Con una participación del 100%, podemos lograr un gran impacto en las vidas de amigos, familias y vecinos necesitados. Si aún no ha realizado su compromiso de apoyo, puede devolver su formulario de compromiso a la oficina parroquial o hacer su donación en línea. Recuerden que cada donativo cuenta, sin importar cuán grande o pequeño sea. Cada dólar ayuda a los necesitados. Si tienen alguna pregunta o desea hacer una donación, llame a la oficina parroquial o visite el sitio web de la Campaña en www.BecauseWeAreCatholic.org

**SUGGESTED PETITIONS TO BE INCLUDED
IN THE PRAYER OF THE FAITHFUL**

**SUGGESTED PETITIONS TO BE INCLUDED IN THE PRAYER OF THE FAITHFUL
Written by Deacon Tyler Davis**

Weekend of May 2 & 3

Lord, by the outpouring of your Holy Spirit, you bring unity, foster concord, and inspire community. Please bless all the ministries supported by the *Because We are Catholic Appeal*, that inspired by your grace, these ministries may reveal the work of the Holy Spirit in the communities they serve. Let us pray to the Lord...

Señor, mediante el derramamiento de tu Espíritu Santo, traes unidad, fomentas la concordia e inspiras la vida en comunidad. Por favor bendice a todos los ministerios sostenidos por la *Campaña Porque Somos Católicos*, para que, inspirados por tu gracia, estos ministerios revelen la obra del Espíritu Santo en las comunidades a las que sirven. Roguemos al Señor...

Weekend of May 9 & 10

Lord Jesus, Good Teacher, you perfectly reveal the truth and gently guide us to understanding. Give us the grace to understand what you reveal. By supporting the *Because We are Catholic Appeal*, may we assist in the good work of Catholic Education, especially to the underprivileged and those with special needs. Let us pray to the Lord...

Señor Jesús, Buen Maestro, tú revelas perfectamente la verdad y gentilmente nos guías hacia la comprensión. Concédenos la gracia de comprender aquello que revelas. Al apoyar la *Campaña Porque Somos Católicos*, permítenos contribuir a la noble labor de la educación católica, especialmente en favor de los más desfavorecidos y de aquellos con necesidades especiales. Roguemos al Señor...

Weekend of May 16 & 17

Father, you call us to participate in your Son's work of salvation. May our generosity to the *Because We are Catholic Appeal* support the formation of those who are following your call to the priesthood, religious life, and the permanent diaconate. Let us pray to the Lord...

Padre, nos llamas a participar en la obra de salvación de tu Hijo. Que nuestra generosidad en la *Campaña Porque Somos Católicos* sostenga la formación de aquellos que siguen tu llamado al sacerdocio, a la vida religiosa y al diaconado permanente. Roguemos al Señor...

Weekend of May 23 & 24

O Lord, giver of life and of every good gift, may our charitable support of the *Because We are Catholic Appeal*, united to Your Cross and Resurrection, renew parish life and ministries throughout the Diocese of Allentown. May this Sixty-Fifth Anniversary of her faithful service be rewarded with souls returning to the life of the Eucharist and Marian Devotion. Let us pray to the Lord...

Oh Señor, dador de vida y de todo don precioso: que nuestro apoyo caritativo en la *Campaña Porque Somos Católicos* —unido a tu Cruz y Resurrección— renueve la vida parroquial y los ministerios en toda la Diócesis de Allentown. Que este sexagésimo quinto aniversario de su fiel servicio sea recompensado con almas que regresen a la vida de la Eucaristía y a la devoción mariana. Roguemos al Señor...

PARISH COMMITTEE

Summary

A local, parish-based committee of volunteers for the Because We Are Catholic Annual Appeal, consisting of 3-5 individuals, can assume some of the Appeal tasks from the pastor and parish staff. Parishes with Because We Are Catholic Annual Appeal committees generally have a more successful and enjoyable experience. Specific responsibilities for committee members include:

- **Make your gift** to the 2026 Because We Are Catholic Annual Appeal.
- **Pulpit Announcements & Bulletin Inserts:** The committee will be responsible for making certain bulletin inserts and pulpit announcements are available.
- **Commitment Sunday:** The committee will be responsible for making certain that the Appeal materials are available and that the pledge cards are collected at Mass.
- **Be available as a resource** by phone or email to your pastor for assistance or consultation.

Volunteer oversight for the Because We Are Catholic Appeal can also be assigned to the Parish Council, Finance Committee, or as a project for another parish council or group.

BECAUSE WE ARE CATHOLIC ANNUAL APPEAL PARTICIPATION

Participation is KEY! Once again, we are focusing on participation in the Because We Are Catholic Annual Appeal.

- The best results occur when the pastor/priest completes a pledge card with the parishioners. Verbally ask them to prayerfully make a gift. Invite parishioners to complete the “in-pew” card. It is also beneficial to have a special collection of the cards or have the parishioners come forward and place cards in the basket at the altar.
- Encourage pledging instead of one-time gifts. Remind people they may make a pledge and pay it over a period of time.
- Assure people that every gift is important and every gift helps. Those who are not in a position to make a gift are asked to fill out the commitment card and indicate “prayers only.” This will save on additional mailing expenses.
- For commitment weekend and the weeks to follow, it is very important to have extra “in-pew” commitment envelopes, writing instrument (if possible) readily available and easily accessible to parishioners.

ADDITIONAL BECAUSE WE ARE CATHOLIC ANNUAL APPEAL MATERIALS

- **Banners and Lawn Signs:** Banners and lawn signs are available. Please call Michele at 610-871-5200 Ext. 2282 or e-mail mmullikin@allentowndiocese.org if you need additional banners and signs.
- **Prayer Request Cards:** All are welcome to return the Prayer Request card to be remembered during daily Mass by Bishop Schlert or a Seminarian. Completed prayer requests cards may remain anonymous.
- **Prayers of the Faithful:** Petitions should be used during the Prayer of the Faithful for the weeks of the Appeal.
- **Posters:** Posters are provided for you and should be hung in gathering and entrance places.
- **Because We Are Catholic Pledge Envelopes:** The pledge envelopes should be available in the parish office. All parishioners will receive their request letter in the mail.
- **Business Reply Envelopes (BRE):** The BRE's are designed for you to return your pledge commitments/envelopes to the Development Office. *Please mail us your pledge forms weekly* so that we may send thank you letters out in a timely fashion. **Please use the large BRE envelope when mailing larger quantities of pledge forms and the small BRE envelopes when mailing smaller quantities.**
- **GIFTS OF CASH:** If parishioners choose to turn cash in to your parish, **please be certain to mark the amount of their pledge on their form**, deposit it in your account and then make a check out to "Annual Appeal" in the exact amount of their pledge. You may simply make out one check for all cash donations, however, it is **imperative** that you mark the amounts on each donor's pledge form so that we may record the pledge in the donor's account and send them a thank you/acknowledgement letter. Please do not deposit checks, or separate checks from the pledge forms. Thank you!