

CASA reminds Catholics of the importance of tithing

written by Malea Hargett |



Through Bishop Anthony B. Taylor’s recorded homilies on the first weekend every February at all Masses, development director Dianne Brady said she sees that more people are getting the message about the importance of the diocesan annual appeal and tithing.

Catholic Arkansas Sharing Appeal 2014 will begin Feb. 1-2 with an in-pew solicitation. Pledge envelopes will be available at all weekend Masses. Catholics are encouraged to donate 1 percent of their income before taxes to the appeal to assist diocesan, school and parish ministries and programs, such as seminarian education, youth and campus ministries and the Clergy Welfare Fund.

In his homily, Bishop Taylor explains that the diocesan guideline for tithing is to donate 10 percent of their adjusted gross income — 5 percent to their parish, 4 percent to other charities or more to their parish and 1 percent to the diocesan appeal. For a household with \$50,000 in income, it is suggested to donate \$50 a month for 10 months.

“One thing I have noticed in a small number of people is that the bishop talks about tithing. ... People hear him saying that. Tithing is an important part of their faith.”

Brady said she also sees that more parishioners understand that making a pledge is a possible way to support the appeal. Usually pledges are made over 10 months.

“There is part of our audience that needs it broken down,” she said. “They can see that it’s realistic. ... You don’t have to give it all in one lump sum. I think it is really helpful to a lot of people. It makes it manageable in budgets,” she said.

This year’s theme is “Whose Kingdom Are We Building?”

“Pope Francis is showing us how to now allow that faith to travel that longest 18 inches from our head to our heart, whereby we actually get to know Jesus personally (and not just know about him) and thereby empower us to really live our faith with all our heart, 24/7 — which includes doing our share to build up the Kingdom of God here and now, in Arkansas,” the bishop said in his recorded homily. “If we are not aligned with the Kingdom of God now, in the way we live our life now, how do we expect to share in the life of the Kingdom of God in the world to come? If we aren’t making sacrifices to make the world a better place now, whose kingdom are we building with our efforts? Our own, or the Lord’s?”

The Diocese of Little Rock is again seeking to raise \$2 million. Last year the diocese raised \$1,833,000, \$167,000 short of the goal. The 2013 total dropped compared to the amount raised in 2012.

“Some capital campaigns have been going on in some of the larger parishes,” Brady said of one reason for the dip.

CASA will be divided up among these ministries:

- Diocesan ministries: \$550,000
- House of Formation loan: \$475,000
- Parish and mission support: \$200,000
- Youth and campus ministry: \$150,000
- Grants to Catholic schools: \$100,000
- Grants to religious education programs: \$100,000
- Clergy Welfare Fund: \$100,000
- Seminarian education: \$75,000
- Catholic Charities of Arkansas: \$100,000
- Catholic Adoption Services: \$50,000

Finance director Greg Wolfe said CASA is expected to pay off the House of Formation loan this year, and additional money raised from CASA 2014 will be diverted to other capital projects approved by Bishop Taylor.

More information is available by [clicking here](#).