



The Bicentennial Campaign Guide to Pledge Fulfillment



Procedures & Templates to Communicate Your Parish's
Bicentennial Campaign Progress and Encourage Pledge Fulfillment

March 2023

Introduction

The *Bicentennial Campaign*, an historic and monumental effort across the Diocese of Charleston, was carried-out from 2018 to 2021 with the goal of strengthening the parishes and missions of our state, as well as preparing our Church's ministries, schools, and social programs for the coming generations.

Your parish participated in this capital campaign by identifying the areas of need that could be addressed with your share of the *Bicentennial Campaign* funds, followed by widespread solicitation of your parishioners to support the effort through five-year pledges and one-time gifts. To ensure the pledges that your devoted parishioners made to your campaign are fulfilled over the next several years, it is imperative that they are kept in-the-loop on all progress and activity related to their financial contributions.

While the *Bicentennial Campaign* was overwhelmingly successful, an ongoing and collaborative effort between the Diocese and parishes is required to effectively communicate how the funds are being used on the parish level, as parishioners want to know how their dollars are being spent locally at their homes of worship. Furthermore, since at least 50% of every dollar paid will be returned to the parishes to meet your critical needs, your parish may not be able to address the needs that were outlined during the campaign if no effort is made to encourage pledge fulfillment.

This guide has been assembled to assist you with the **pledge fulfillment process**. As time goes on, it can be expected that certain parishioners may fall behind in making payments towards their pledges. While the Diocese will routinely send pledge reminders to parishioners according to the payment schedule indicated on their pledge, it is important that your parish maintains regular communication about the status of your *Bicentennial Campaign* project(s) and pledge payments. Above all else, this guide is meant to provide you with methods of effective communication that will result in increased pledge fulfillment and steady parishioner participation.

Keys to Maximizing Pledge Fulfillment

- 1.) Communicate with parishioners the status of case for support fulfillment. This should be done both at Mass through pulpit announcements as well as in bulletin and email communications;
- 2.) Reach out to parishioners who are behind or have not yet made any payments towards their pledge to ascertain viability of the pledge.

The Steps of the Pledge Fulfillment Process:

1. The Diocese of Charleston Stewardship & Mission Advancement team can provide your parish with the following materials:
 - a. The current status of your parish's *Bicentennial Campaign* collections;
 - b. The payment status and contact information of parishioners who have fallen behind on pledge payments;
 - c. **Downloadable** communication templates for you to implement and customize that encourage pledge fulfillment.

Your parish also has access to a [secure online portal](#) where you can download your current *Bicentennial Campaign* information whenever you want. Your pastor automatically has access to this site. Please [contact our team](#) if you are a parish staff member who should also have access to your reports.

2. The pastors, staff members, and relevant parish committees summarize how your share of the *Bicentennial Campaign* funds are being used and/or any progress that has been made, as well as review the list of parishioners who have fallen behind on pledge payments. The summary of your progress should include:
 - a. Any expenditures of *Bicentennial Campaign* funds
 - b. Any plans to spend the funds with targeted dates
 - c. If applicable, any discussions with third-parties (contractors, architects, etc.)
3. If needed, volunteers are recruited to assist the pastors and staff with outreach to parishioners.
4. The methods of communication are implemented to both update your parishioners on how their dollars are being spent, and to encourage parishioners to fulfill their pledge.
5. This process is repeated at least twice a year until the pledge collection timeline concludes.

Methods of Communication Provided in English and Spanish:

Individual Parishioner Outreach Templates		
<i>Method</i>	<i>Resource Provided</i>	<i>Responsible Party</i>
In-print	Mailing letter	Pastor
Online	E-mail	Pastor's e-mail account
Word of Mouth	Phone call script	Pastor / parish staff / volunteers

Parish-Wide Update Templates	
In-print	Bulletin blurb
Online	Parish-wide e-mail Social media post Web site update
Word of Mouth	Script for Mass announcement

Applying the Diocesan Data Provided

Current Campaign Figures

Included with the materials provided by the Diocesan of Charleston Stewardship team is your parish's current status of *Bicentennial Campaign* collections. These figures should be applied to your parish-wide communications to update your parishioners on collection progress:

- The amount your parish has collected
- The amount that remains to be collected

Identifying Parishioners Who Have Not Kept Pace

In the donor reports that are provided to your parish (in both PDF and Microsoft Excel format), parishioners who appear to have fallen off the pace of making pledge payments will be highlighted, and therefore should be targeted for outreach.

It is important to remember that reaching out to these parishioners will not only help with pledge fulfillment, but will also give them an opportunity to let you know if a change to their commitment needs to be made. This will ultimately provide a more accurate forecast of the funds your parish will collect in the next 3-4 years.

The donor reports will include:

- Parishioner Name
- Parishioner Address, Phone Number, and E-mail Address (if available)
- Pledge/Gift Amount
- Most recent payment made (if applicable)
- Date of most recent payment made (if applicable)
- Current pledge balance

This information can be re-arranged by gift size and percentage unfulfilled to more accurately identify the larger gifts that should be prioritized for outreach.

The purpose of providing this information in Excel format is to assist you if you choose to merge the parishioner information into the provided mailing templates.

MAILING TO PARISHIONERS

[PARISH LETTERHEAD]

[DATE]

[PARISHIONER NAME]
[ADDRESS]
[CITY, STATE, ZIP]

Dear [Parishioner First Names],

When [Parish Name] embarked on the Bicentennial Campaign in [Collection Start Year], it was my prayer that our parish family would come together to strengthen our foundation and ensure that our children and future generations of Catholics could enjoy a vibrant, Christ-centered community here in [City Name].

It is my profound joy to update you that \$[Pledge Total] has been pledged to [Parish Name]'s campaign effort, and our goal of [Campaign Case Elements] [is/are] becoming reality due to the continued generosity of our parishioners. So far, we have received \$[Total Paid] in pledge fulfillments!

Since the design of our campaign allowed for pledges to be paid until [Collection End Year], I am reaching out to confirm your continued participation in this effort. Our records indicate that you made the following commitment to [Parish Name]'s campaign:

Pledge Total	Reoccurrence	Last Payment Received	Remaining Balance
[Pledge Amount]	[Frequency]	[Payment Total]	[Pledge Balance]

On a five-year pledge payment schedule, participants should be at a minimum paid of 20%. However, we know that circumstances can change. If you still intend to meet your pledge by [Collection End Date], or if you need to change your pledge amount or payment schedule, please let our parish staff know as soon as possible. We can be reached at [parish phone/e-mail].

Your devotion and generosity are how our needs can be met. Now, more than ever, we are committed to living by the Gospel and bringing the Love of Christ to all of our parishioners and guests, and we hope that [Parish Name] will always be a space for comfort and community for you.

May God's Blessings Be Yours,

[Pastor Signature]

[Pastor Name]

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**E-MAIL FROM PASTOR OR PARISH ACCOUNT
(FLOCKNOTE NOW APPLICABLE)**

E-MAIL FROM PARISH/PASTOR

Subject: Reminder: Your Pledge to [Parish Name]

Dear [Parishioner First Name],

In the hectic and often uncertain times that we have endured over recent months, it is [my/our] prayer that you have felt the Love of Christ and found comfort in [my/our] messages at [Parish Name]. As a parishioner, you are the lifeblood of our community and we rely on your devotion to ensure we can provide a vibrant, Christ-centered church to our children, our friends, and future generations of Catholics.

[I am / We are] are writing this e-mail to you to provide you an update on our parish's goals from last year's Bicentennial Campaign and to confirm your continued participation in our effort. To date, we have received \$[Total Payments] of the \$[Total Pledge Amount] that was pledged for the purpose of [Case Elements]. [I am / We are] amazed by the generosity of our parishioners and want to ensure you that every cent we receive is deeply appreciated and will be used for its intended purpose.

[I / we] hope that you have taken the time to reflect on your commitment to this effort. Our records indicate that you made the following pledge to [Parish Name]'s campaign:

Pledge Total	Reoccurrence	Remaining Balance
[Pledge Amount]	[Frequency]	[Pledge Balance]

As a reminder, pledges to this campaign may be fulfilled over time until 2024. Ideally, participants will have contributed at least 20% of their pledge by now, however we know that circumstances can change. If you still intend to meet your pledge by [Collection End Date], or if you need to change your pledge amount or payment schedule, please let our parish staff know as soon as possible. We can be reached at [parish phone/e-mail].

Your devotion and generosity are how our needs can be met. Now, more than ever, we are committed to living by the Gospel and bringing the Word of God to all of our parishioners and guests, and [I/we] hope that [Parish Name] will always be a space for comfort and community for you.

May God's Blessings Be Yours,

[Signature]

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PHONE OUTREACH GUIDE AND SCRIPT

SCRIPT:

- *Hi [Parishioner Name], this is [Your Name] calling on behalf of [Pastor] at [Parish]. Do you have a couple minutes to chat?*
 - *If Yes: Great!*
 - *If No: That's alright! Is there a good time that I can call back?*
- *I'm reaching out as part of [Parish]'s effort to keep our Bicentennial Campaign commitments up-to-date.*
- *During our campaign in [Year of Participation], you made a commitment of [Pledge Total] to be paid [Pledge Frequency].*
- *While we know the past year has been very difficult for so many in our community, the pledges we received during the campaign will allow us to address [insert your parish's needs], and we are deeply thankful for the commitment you made to our effort.*
- *We know that your pledge was made in good faith, and each pledge is important to reaching the goals of the Bicentennial Campaign.*

Option 1:

- *Are you able to resume payments to fulfill your original commitment?*

Option 2:

- *Do you need to adjust your payment frequency? We're also happy to extend the timeline of your pledge, if need be.*

Option 3:

- *Do you need to lower the amount of your original commitment to our Bicentennial Campaign?*

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BULLETIN ARTICLE
(INCLUDE IN BULLETIN AT LEAST ONCE A MONTH)

An Update on the Bicentennial Campaign at [Parish]:
What Your Generosity Has Accomplished

It has been over a year since our parish completed our participation in the *Bicentennial Campaign*. As a reminder, your support and generosity helped us raise \$xxx,xxx in pledges from xxx parishioners, which is xx% of our target. To date, \$xx,xxx has been received from these pledge payments, and with those funds, we have been able to [insert action taken toward addressing parish needs].

We recognize the financial uncertainty that COVID-19 has caused for many in our community. [Parish Name] has not been immune from these challenges. Despite the obstacles that have been placed in our way, we are still amazed at the support parishioners continue to show for our parish in the form of continued payments on their Bicentennial Campaign pledges. It is your devotion that will allow our spiritual home to persevere and flourish through these difficult times.

Fulfilling your pledge strengthens our parish family. If you have made a pledge and need to make an adjustment, please contact our parish staff at [insert parish contact info] at your earliest convenience.

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MASS ANNOUNCEMENT TALKING POINTS

Bicentennial Campaign Pledge Fulfillment Suggested Speaking Points During Mass Announcements / Homily

- [I / We] want to provide a quick update on the Bicentennial Campaign funds that [Parish] has been receiving since we completed our campaign effort in 2019.
- You may recall that we were able to raise [Total Pledge Amount] through the pledges of our generous and devoted parishioners. Again, [I / We] wish to deeply thank those of you who committed to our campaign. Since our campaign wrapped up, we have been receiving quarterly payments that have totaled [Disbursement Amount].
- With these funds, we have begun [insert action taken using campaign funds to address parish needs]. [I am / We are] overjoyed by what we have and will continue to accomplish through your generosity and continued commitment.
- Of course, the recent months have been stressful for us all. The suspension of Masses and parish activity has limited our communication to our parishioners, so we would like to remind everyone who made a pledge to our campaign about all the good it will do for not only our parish, but also the vulnerable and unfortunate across our state.
- If you made a pledge but wish to make an adjustment to the amount or frequency of payments, please let our parish staff know as soon as possible. It is important for us to have a clear understanding of the timeframe that we'll receive campaign funds over the next few years so that we can plan accordingly on how our needs can be addressed.
- Please refer to this week's bulletin for more information on our campaign progress. Thank you.

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Questions?

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