

understanding how  
**catholics**  
give

four trends in catholic philanthropy that may surprise you

# 1

## ■ mass attendance is not fully correlated with giving

Though Mass attendance does have impact on likelihood of giving, don't overlook those who attend infrequently.

✚ **Consider targeted appeals** to these members of the faithful. Resource appropriately, measure your results, and benchmark year over year.

✚ **Develop empathy**, remembering that for some people, attending Mass a few times a year represents an increase from previous years. Your stewardship efforts can further strengthen this relationship.

✚ **Find joy in the wins.** Celebrate when an infrequent Mass attendee makes a gift! Send a handwritten thank you note or make a personal phone call.

### PERCENT OF HOUSEHOLDS THAT GIVE REGULARLY TO THEIR PARISHES



#### REGULARLY ATTENDING HOUSEHOLDS

If someone attends Mass once a week or more, they're very likely to be a member of a household that regularly gives to its parish.



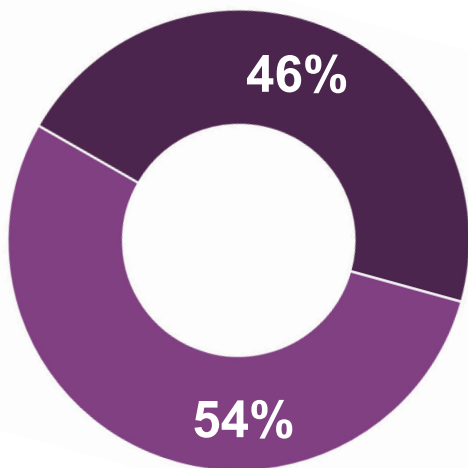
#### IRREGULARLY ATTENDING HOUSEHOLDS

However, don't discount infrequent Mass attendees. There is a one-in-five chance that they are a member of a household that regularly gives to its parish.

# 2

## ■ a narrative focused on mission has greater impact than one focused on scarcity

### REPORT THAT THEIR PARISHES FOCUS ON NEED AND SCARCITY



### REPORT THAT THEIR PARISHES FOCUS ON OTHER AREAS

How we talk about money and mission matters, and it is likely to inspire more donors to give, and to give more.

✚ **Model and encourage active spiritual engagement** with personal, parish, and diocesan finances.

✚ **Foster a collaborative culture** where ownership of the mission of the parish and diocese naturally leads to opportunities to give.

✚ **Frame asks** as invitations for the faithful to participate in living out the mission of the Church, rather than lists of bills to be paid.

Nearly half of Catholics report that their parishes and dioceses articulate appeals focused on scarcity.

# 3. a personal, customized approach is the best method

The more familiar the solicitor, the greater likelihood a Catholic will make a gift. A personal ask is always the best approach.

- ✚ Consider creating a parish or diocesan development committee if you do not have one.
- ✚ Recruit parishioners to make asks alongside the pastor.
- ✚ Provide joint development training for both parishioners and pastors alike.

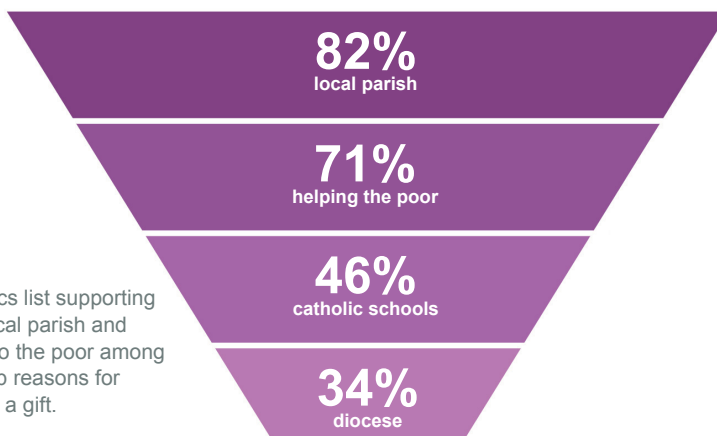
Seventy-three percent of Catholics say they would be “somewhat” or “very” likely to respond to a family member or friend who asked for a financial gift to the Church, while 53% say the same for a pastor who makes a financial request during Mass, and only 36% say the same for a request from their bishop in a diocesan newspaper or mailer.



**PERCENT LIKELY TO GIVE BASED ON METHOD OF GIFT REQUEST**

# 4. the more local the need, the better

**PERCENT OF FOCUS AREAS NAMED WITHIN TOP THREE REASONS FOR CATHOLIC GIVING**



Catholics list supporting their local parish and giving to the poor among their top reasons for making a gift.

Catholics are more than twice as likely to consider the needs of their parish and the poor as giving priorities than they are the needs of their diocese.

- ✚ **Emphasize the ways a gift will benefit the parish first and the poor second** when making an ask or planning an appeal.
- ✚ **Remind your congregation that parishes don't individually educate seminarians or care for retired priests, but that this is done collectively for the benefit of all in the diocese.**
- ✚ **Don't make assumptions.** Take care not to surmise that every recipient of an appeal is equally informed on the details of the workings of their diocese in relation to a parish.



# GP Catholic Services

A division of Graham-Pelton Consulting

GP Catholic Services is a leading fundraising consulting firm serving the Catholic Church. We specialize in designing and managing fundraising campaigns for dioceses, schools, parishes, religious orders and congregations.

GP Catholic Services is a division of Graham-Pelton Consulting. We offer decades of fundraising and development experience with a powerful focus on the Catholic Church.

**[www.gpcatholic.com](http://www.gpcatholic.com)**