

August is National Make-A-Will Month!

August is National Make-A-Will Month. It's hard to believe, but nearly 67% of Americans don't have a legal will. For those in our diocese who fall into this category, the Diocese of Austin has partnered with FreeWill to offer our entire community the opportunity to create their legal will for free during National Make-A-Will Month.

As we're all stewards of Christ, now is a great time to review or begin your will to honor God with the many blessings He's given us. Writing your will is a powerful way to steward those blessings God has entrusted to you while protecting the people you love and creating a legacy that extends your faith for generations to come. But did you know that creating one also has personal benefits? This is particularly apparent when you use it to give a gift to a cause you love.

Here's how including a gift in your will benefits you:

1. It can lessen anxiety. Planning ahead can make it less daunting to talk about what happens when you're gone. How? It gives you reassurance that the people and causes close to your heart are taken care of.
2. It can lend perspective. Taking stock of what's important can help you focus on your goals and be more aware of how you want to impact the world.
3. It sets an example. Your gift can be an inspiration. Your story can have a ripple effect on your loved ones or others who you share it with.
4. It just feels good. Giving makes you feel good. Really, it does. Research shows that the act of giving reduces stress-related activity in one area of the brain while increasing reward-related activity in another.

So where do you begin? Of course, loved ones are the first people to consider when creating your will. Then, think about the nonprofits you want to support such as the Diocese of Austin. A planned legacy gift can benefit your favorite Catholic ministry, school, or parish—those that hold a special place in your heart or have served you and your family over the course of your lifetime. Providing for causes you care about is an excellent way to demonstrate your values, help you gain a better understanding of what's important to you and set an example for others to follow.

Creating your will is an opportunity to steward your blessings in a way that proclaims what you believe while protecting your loved ones. It's a chance to leave this world a little better and more compassionate than you found it. We like to call it the "Ultimate Act of Christian Stewardship." You can create or update your will by visiting freewill.com/austindiocese. Contact Dan Wierzbowski at dan-wierzbowski@austindiocese.org for help with starting or updating your plan or visit austindiocese.myplannedgift.org. We are here to help!

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