



YOU WILL BE *my* WITNESSES

A Campaign for the
DIOCESE OF ROCKFORD

CASE FOR SUPPORT



*"The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and you will receive strength from him;
you are to be my witnesses in Jerusalem and throughout Judaea, in Samaria,
yes, and to the ends of the earth."*

ACTS 1:8

Dear Friends in Christ,

In the first chapter of the Gospel according to St. John, we witness John the Baptist pointing out “the Lamb of God” to two of his disciples, who immediately begin to follow Jesus. When Jesus notices them, he asks a deeply searching question: “What are you looking for?” (*Jn. 1:38*)

This question resonates just as powerfully today. **What are we looking for?** In our hearts, we are all seeking meaning and purpose that goes beyond our earthly existence. We are seeking someone in whom to place our belief. When our belief in God fades or our relationship with Him falters, we risk filling that spiritual void with gods of our own making. It’s then that the tragedies of loneliness, addiction, anger, and despair take root.

But there is good news. God gives us someone in whom we can believe, so we can live out each day with purpose and meaning (*Jn 3:16-17*). As Bishop Robert Barron aptly writes, “In his passion to set right a disjointed universe, God broke open his own heart in love. The Father sent not simply a representative but his own Son into the dysfunction of the world, so that he might gather that world into the bliss of the divine life.” (Wordonfire.org, *Gospel Reflections*)

It is through this divine love and purpose that we are called to share the Gospel with others. As your bishop, I am blessed to invite you to a pivotal moment in the life of the Diocese of Rockford. Through the *You Will Be My Witnesses* Campaign; I am asking you to join me in reaffirming our commitment to Jesus Christ and to His command to spread the Gospel “to the ends of the earth.”

This booklet provides the details of our campaign – the why, how, when and where of our mission of evangelization. It also shares the need for your support to turn this vision into a reality. Through this campaign, we will answer the hope-filled appeals we’ve heard from so many to “fill our churches again,” to “engage young people and families in the life of the Church,” and to “teach us how to share our faith.”

Our campaign will also help us to carry out the task of every generation of the faithful regarding maintaining the integrity and beauty of our diocesan structures, especially the churches where we so often gather to receive and adore Our Lord. This too is part of our own participation in the task of spreading the Good News of Jesus Christ.

Through this campaign, let’s be evangelized – ourselves – to the great fortune of being called sons and daughters of the living God. Let’s join as brothers and sisters of Jesus – inspired by the Holy Spirit – to be true witnesses of the Gospels and bring about a time of grace and renewal in our diocese and our parishes.

With gratitude for your prayers and generosity, I am

Sincerely yours in Christ,

+ *David J. Malloy*

Most Reverend David J. Malloy
Bishop of Rockford



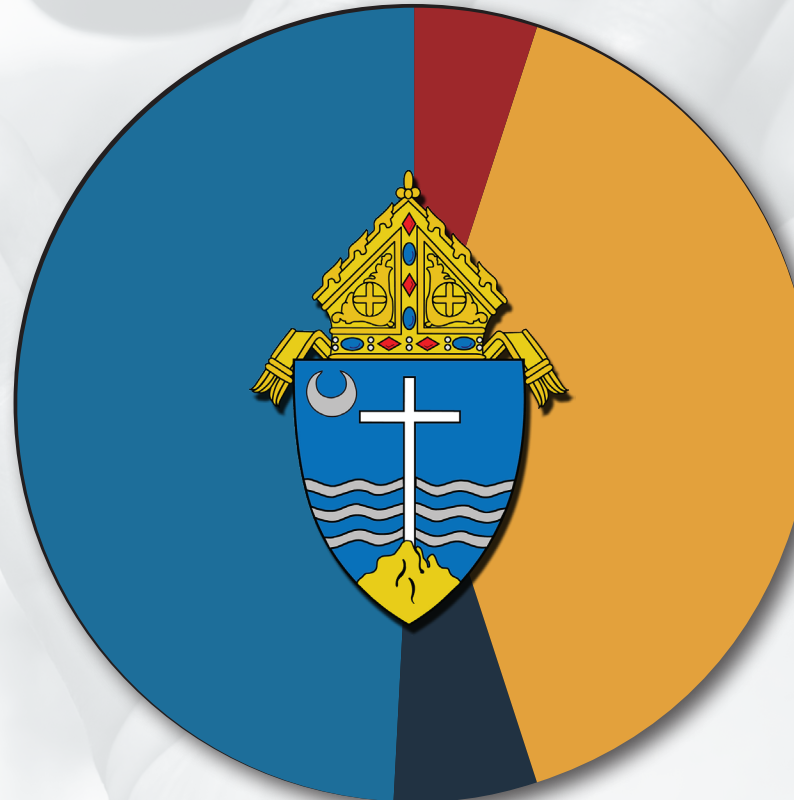


5%
PARISH
OPPORTUNITY FUND
(\$3 million)

The specific projects and employment positions delineated within the Goals sections of the You Will Be My Witnesses Campaign will be pursued as the campaign progresses. However, projects and employment positions may be adjusted as future circumstances and organizational needs evolve.

49%
EVANGELIZATION
(\$29.5 million)

40%
HEALTHY,
VIBRANT PARISHES
(\$24 million)



6%
DIOCESAN FACILITIES
(\$3.5 million)

Why Evangelization and Why Now?

Every Christian is challenged, here and now, to be actively engaged in evangelization; indeed, anyone who has truly experienced God's saving love does not need much time or lengthy training to go out and proclaim that love.

POPE FRANCIS,
JOY OF THE GOSPEL, #120

“We really want to empower the average person in the pew to be able to share their faith with others and become missionary disciples themselves.”

FATHER PHILLIP KAIM
Pastor – Holy Family, Rockford
& Chair of Campaign
Clergy Committee

A future of healthy, vibrant parishes | \$24 million

A diocese cannot truly flourish without thriving parishes. Parishes are the lifeblood of our Catholic community, where faith comes alive, and hearts are set on fire for Christ. As the U.S. Bishops remind us, *"Parishes are the place where God's people meet Jesus in word and sacrament..."* (Communities of Salt and Light, p. 1). With \$24 million dedicated to this vital mission, the renewal and transformation of our parishes is at the core of our campaign.

At least 40% of the funds collected on pledges at the parish will be directed to the projects that matter most to each parish. Once a parish reaches its baseline target, 60% of anything raised beyond that goal will stay within the parish. And if a parish doubles its baseline target, 100% of the additional funds raised will be theirs to steward.

The aim of the campaign is to bring vitality to the parish, promote participation in parish life, and evangelize and serve the faithful and the surrounding community. If you're receiving this case statement in conjunction with your parish's campaign, you can find the goal(s) of your parish's effort in the inside cover of this booklet.

The campaign's short-term impact on parishes across the diocese likely will be improved facilities, new ministries and new energy. The long-term impact, meanwhile, will be a greater focus on the mission to bring more souls to Christ, stewardship as a way of life in our families and parishes, and a stronger, more unified diocesan community.

For parishes in need, an opportunity to do more | \$3 million

The *You Will Be My Witnesses* Campaign is dedicated to uplifting all our parishes, recognizing that each plays a vital role in the spiritual life of our diocese. At the same time, this campaign seeks to provide special support to parishes most in need. A total of 5% of the funds raised – equivalent to \$3 million if we reach our campaign goal of \$60 million – will be allocated to support parishes whose average annual income for the 2023 and 2024 Diocesan Appeals was \$400,000 or less.



Parishes with an average income of \$100,000 or less will be eligible for a 55% match of their average income.



Parishes with an average income of \$100,001 to \$200,000 will be eligible for a 40% match of their average income.



Parishes with an average income of \$200,001 to \$300,000 will be eligible for a 25% match of their average income.



Parishes with an average income of \$300,001 to \$400,000 will be eligible for a 15% match of their average income.





The fact is: ministries take money. How can we say 'no' to providing opportunities for our kids that truly impact their lives forever... and helps them to stay involved in their faith?"

AUBRI BOURGE, Youth Minister – St. Mary's, Sycamore

Evangelization | \$29.5 million

Pope Francis reminds us “Each Christian and every community must discern the path that the Lord points out, but all of us are asked to obey his call to go forth from our own comfort zone in order to reach all the ‘peripheries’ in need of the light of the Gospel” (Joy of the Gospel, 20). Taking this to heart, we will use existing diocesan ministries to lead us in our call to be witnesses to the person of Jesus and the love of God. The campaign goals below address the diocese's current needs and are supported by feedback received from both clergy and laity during the assessment period.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION AND FAITH FORMATION OFFICE (\$13.2 million)

In a culture seeking identity, purpose and healing – ultimately searching for God – our mission is to empower clergy and laity to share the Gospel. To advance this mission we will endow the following initiatives:

- **Invest in Lay Evangelization (\$265,000 annual distribution)**
Support 25 parishes in recruiting, training, and retaining catechetical leaders to enhance youth and family engagement. Funds will also support diocesan youth events and provide scholarships for youth and volunteers.
- **Religious Education & Youth Ministry Parish Cohorts (\$170,000 annual distribution)**
Create 14 religious education or youth ministry parish cohorts. This will allow small to medium-sized parishes to join in hiring a qualified and capable person to lead a unified interparish program.
- **Diocesan Mentor Program (\$162,000 annual distribution)**
Launch a program with a full-time coordinator and a team of mentors to help parishes evaluate, plan, and train for evangelization efforts, fostering communities focused on discipleship.



Evangelization

CATHOLIC SCHOOLS (\$12.1 million)

With optimism for the future, we aim to guide students in daily encounters with Christ, forming faith-filled Christians and future parish leaders. The following initiatives – with (annual distributions) generated through endowments – will expand our impact and share His light:

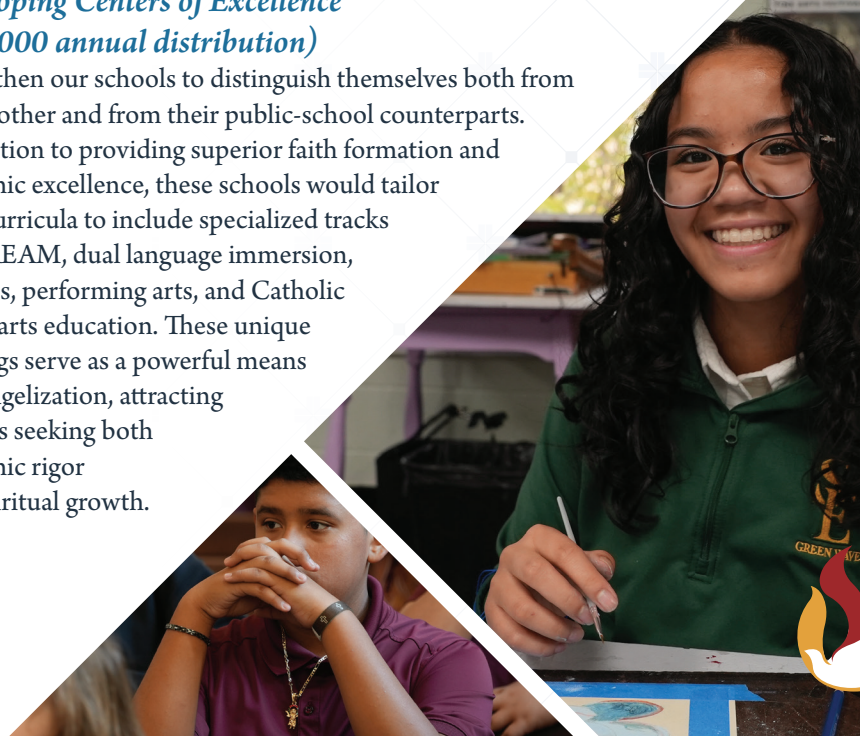
- Investment in Our Students | Tuition Assistance (\$304,500 annual distribution)**
 Ensure Catholic education is affordable and accessible for all families, fostering a diverse and inclusive community.
- Student and Family Evangelization (\$80,000 annual distribution)**
 Develop a curriculum rooted in evangelization, Christian anthropology, and Theology of the Body to deepen personal relationships with Christ.
- Incentives / Strategic Partnerships (\$80,000 annual distribution)**
 Support professional development for principals and teachers and partner with Catholic teacher preparation programs to recruit skilled educators and leaders.
- Developing Centers of Excellence (\$80,000 annual distribution)**
 Strengthen our schools to distinguish themselves both from one another and from their public-school counterparts. In addition to providing superior faith formation and academic excellence, these schools would tailor their curricula to include specialized tracks in STREAM, dual language immersion, fine arts, performing arts, and Catholic liberal arts education. These unique offerings serve as a powerful means of evangelization, attracting families seeking both academic rigor and spiritual growth.



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“Our kids, seeing us actively participating in their school and in the parish, shows them that we are invested in our faith and theirs, as well.”

PAT AND RACHEL McAVOY
 Parents, Sts. Peter and Paul Catholic School, Cary



Evangelization

LIFE AND FAMILY EVANGELIZATION (LiFE) OFFICE (\$2.7 million)

Strong Catholic families are vital to the Church's mission of proclaiming the Gospel. Endowed funds will support two bilingual coordinator positions (with an annual distribution of \$120,000) to build up English- and Spanish-speaking families through prayer, formation, advocacy, and accompaniment:

- ***Hispanic Marriage Preparation and Natural Family Planning***

Lead Spanish-language marriage preparation, address the unique needs of the Hispanic community, and oversee Natural Family Planning instruction in English and Spanish.

- ***Family and Respect Life Ministries***

Assist parishes to strengthen marriages, support struggling couples, foster Catholic family life, and promote respect life teachings in English- and Spanish- speaking communities.

BISHOP LANE RETREAT CENTER (\$1.5 million)

For six decades, the retreat center has provided the space and time for retreatants to "...ponder over one's proper relationship with God and to his fellow man...". There are numerous possibilities to provide spiritual and emotional benefits to clergy and laity; those seeking respite and healing, or simply a stronger relationship with their Creator. Projects included in the renovation of the retreat center include the following areas:

- ***Retreat Bedrooms (\$600,000)***

Refurbish 50 guest bedrooms. This will include flooring, vanity and mirror, lighting, window treatments, and linens.

- ***Private Baths (\$300,000)***

Renovate 50 private bathrooms, updating them with new shower stalls, toilets, lighting, and flooring.

- ***Common Areas (\$400,000)***

Update the retreat center conference room lighting, install seating and flooring in the chapel, and remodel the sacristy.

- ***Youth Center (\$200,000)***

Replace five rooftop HVAC units at the Youth Center.



"The retreat center represents the foundation that everybody needs. And that's what I've found here. It's brought great healing in my life and great joy. And I've seen what it can do in other people's lives to look at God, feel God in His beauty."

FAYE EDLUND

Volunteer – Bishop Lane Retreat Center



Diocesan Facilities \$3.5 million

The Diocesan Administration Center in Rockford houses the Chancery offices, Diocesan Curia, administrative offices, a chapel and meeting spaces. As with any building, overtime, repairs and maintenance are required to provide a safe and comfortable work environment. Campaign dollars allocated to this initiative would be directed towards much-needed replacement of aging heating and cooling systems. By raising the funds through this campaign effort, we can avoid assessing the parishes for the costs.





Campaign Prayer

ALL: Heavenly Father, we know that we are but stewards of all you have given us – our lives, our talents and our resources.

We are grateful to those throughout the diocese who have worked to spread and deepen our Catholic faith and who have inspired us to preserve the gift you gave to your people.

Open our hearts to dream big and not be limited by our fears.

Open our minds to include those who are not part of our community yet.

Release the resources we have received freely from you to be shared for the completion of this campaign, which we believe you are calling us to bring to fruition.

Finally, help us trust and believe you will always provide for all our needs as you have promised through your Son, Jesus Christ Our Lord.

LEADER: As you renew all things in Christ, grant to all the people of our diocese a fresh outpouring of your Holy Spirit.

May this community of faith in our various parishes be of one heart and soul as we work together in your name. We ask this through Christ our Lord.

ALL: Amen.

LEADER: Our Lady of the Immaculate Conception,

ALL: Pray for us!

Nihil Obstat: Rev. Ryan B. Browning, S.T.L.
Censor Librorum
January 6, 2025

Imprimatur: + David J. Malloy, D.D., J.C.L., S.T.D.
Bishop of Rockford, Illinois
January 9, 2025





"Learning to be 'witnesses' is needed very much, because we (Catholics) were taught that religion is private – it's just at home or when we're in church. But if we're going to be witnesses, we need to be witnesses out in the world. If we are prayerful, if we are true followers of our Lord, then that's going to radiate into everyone's life."

JULIETA JACOBO

Diocesan Director of Hispanic Catechesis and Formation

MEASURING OUR SUCCESS

The Holy Spirit is the principle evangelizing agent. He announces the Gospel, changes hearts, and makes it possible to understand the words of salvation. Our work in the *You Will Be My Witnesses* Campaign is designed to support and cooperate with the work of the Spirit.

To measure this cooperation, an Evangelization Scorecard has been developed that is designed to **track metrics over four categories:**



*Impacting the
lives of the
faithful*

1



*Doing the
work of
evangelizing*

2



*Supporting learning
and growth of
evangelizers*

3



*Raising and
dedicating funds
for evangelization*

4

For the purpose of demonstrating transparency and providing assurances that the diocese is a good steward of the donations to the campaign, we will apply measures within these categories including both short-term indicators such as qualified evangelization staff being supported, parishes being mentored and the parishes participating in a Catechetical cohort, to longer-term goals such as increased Mass attendance, Sacraments of Initiation, marriages, and religious education enrollment.



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“We must evangelize because the Lord Jesus commanded us to do so. He gave the Church the unending task of evangelizing as a restless power, to stir and to stimulate all its actions until all nations have heard his Good News and until every person has become his disciple...”

UNITED STATES CONFERENCE OF CATHOLIC BISHOPS
Go and Make Disciples, 28





FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

The following questions have already come up or usually arise with diocesan capital campaigns. We are providing responses to answer any questions you may receive from your parishioners before and during the campaign.

"Be steadfast and persevering, abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that your labor is not in vain."

1 CORINTHIANS 15:58

What is the You Will Be My Witnesses Campaign?

You Will Be My Witnesses is a capital campaign that seeks to raise a minimum of \$60 million in gifts and pledges to strengthen local parishes and bring specific support to evangelization to grow our Catholic Church.

When will the campaign take place?

Campaign preparations are ongoing, and the active campaign will take place in four "waves," beginning with a pilot wave in August 2025. The parish waves will conclude in mid-2027, with a pledge redemption period to follow.

Who will participate and be asked to give for the campaign?

All parishes within the Diocese of Rockford will participate in the campaign during specific "waves" of activity from 2025-2027. Every parishioner in the diocese will be asked to make a sacrificial gift.

Why are we embarking on a campaign of this magnitude?

It has been almost 25 years since our last campaign and much has changed within our diocese. We conducted an assessment to better understand current needs and priorities, gathering valuable feedback from parishes, schools, and the broader diocesan community. After listening to parishioners and engaging in thoughtful reflection and prayer, we identified evangelization and parish vitality as our most pressing priorities. This campaign is a vital step in addressing today's challenges while laying a strong foundation for a thriving, growing Church that will continue to share Christ's message with future generations throughout our diocese.

How is the campaign different from the Diocesan Appeal?

The Diocesan Appeal funds day-to-day diocesan operations, while the campaign is a three-year effort to address specific long-term needs. By investing in the people, programs, and resources that enable us to share the Gospel more effectively, we will strengthen our ministries and expand their capacity to serve.

How will parishes benefit from the You Will Be My Witnesses Campaign?

Our parishes are the heart of our diocese, and we must ensure their strength and viability. If the \$60 million goal is reached, parishes will receive \$24 million to address defined local projects and needs. Additionally, a pool of \$3 million will provide extra support to opportunity parishes.

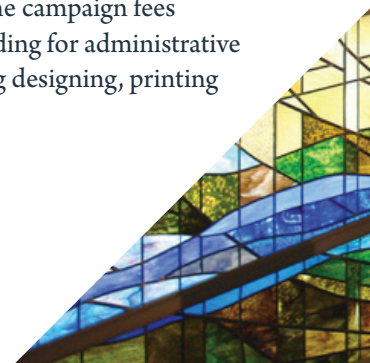
What are the parishes' responsibilities and how will the diocese support the parishes?

Every parish, under the leadership of the pastor, will

- Assess their needs and determine the projects to promote
- Form a campaign team by appointing key volunteers
- Host campaign events
- Personally meet with parishioners to ask for their financial support

The diocese will support parishes by

- Covering all the campaign fees
- Providing funding for administrative costs including designing, printing and mailing.



How is donor intent being honored?

Funds paid on pledges will be held with the *Diocese of Rockford – You Will Be My Witnesses Trust*. The Trust will ensure funds are used to advance the goals outlined in the Case Statement, including: maintaining healthy, vibrant parishes; developing the parish opportunity fund; supporting various evangelization efforts within the Diocese of Rockford; and to address any needs for diocesan facilities within the Catholic Diocese of Rockford.

Will the campaign impact offertory?

Offertory is expected to remain constant during the *You Will Be My Witnesses* three-year pledge period. On many occasions, parishes have experienced noticeable increases in offertory giving in the years following the conclusion of a campaign. (March 2, 2017, “Capital Campaigns Bolster Annual Giving Programs,” Steier Tips, www.steiergroup.com; October 16, 2023 “4 Persistent Capital Campaign Myths, Dispelled With Data,” *Guides and Resources*, www.afpglobal.org)

Are there any anticipated parish or school closings in the Diocese of Rockford?

Strengthening the health and vitality of our parishes and local communities is a core goal of the *You Will Be My Witnesses* Campaign. There are no plans to close parishes or schools within the diocese at this time.

Remind me of the results for the United In Faith Campaign conducted in 2001. What is the status of the funds now?

\$23.4 million was raised during the *United in Faith* Campaign in 2001 for a restricted fund for long-term use for schools, seminarian/priest education, religious education/youth ministry, support for the needy and poor, and priest retirement. As of June 30, 2024, \$27.8 million has been distributed from this fund’s earnings, which currently holds \$34.8 million for these specific uses. Additional information can be found on The Catholic Foundation website: <https://www.foundationrockford.org/uif>.

What is the current financial status of the diocese?

The Diocese of Rockford is in a healthy financial condition. This capital campaign will allow us to fund new ideas, new possibilities, and new growth in our diocese and in our parishes. As a result, our hope is that this campaign will help increase Mass attendance, foster healthier and stronger Catholic families, give rise to greater Catholic witness in our communities and grow ministry participation for years to come.

**WHAT HAPPENS IF WE EXCEED OUR GOAL?**

Should we exceed our \$60 million goal, the additional diocesan funds will be allocated to the following priorities:

Diocesan Facilities Fund

The people of the diocese deserve and should expect that the facilities of the diocese are welcoming and well-maintained. These funds will be used to maintain and improve facilities of and throughout the diocese and to establish an endowment for future needs.

Diocesan Communications Office

Funds will be used to assess and support diocesan offices, churches, and schools in identifying communication needs and resources. This will involve leveraging modern technology and addressing the media needs of parishioners effectively.

Bishop’s Charitable Fund

Bishop Malloy frequently receives requests for financial aid by missionaries, Catholic non-profits and bishops from under-developed areas of the United States and countries around the world as well as local needs and charities. The funds held in this fund will allow him to share from the goodness and generosity of people of the diocese.



BUDGETING *your* PLEDGE *(over three years)*

The chart shows how pledges would work at varying payment frequencies.

TOTAL PLEDGE (Over 3 Years)	ANNUAL PAYMENT	QUARTERLY PAYMENT	MONTHLY PAYMENT
\$100,000	\$33,333	\$8,333	\$2,778
\$75,000	\$25,000	\$6,250	\$2,083
\$50,000	\$16,667	\$4,167	\$1,389
\$25,000	\$8,333	\$2,083	\$694
\$18,000	\$6,000	\$1,500	\$500
\$10,800	\$3,600	\$900	\$300
\$7,200	\$2,400	\$600	\$200
\$5,400	\$1,800	\$450	\$150
\$3,600	\$1,200	\$300	\$100
\$1,800	\$600	\$150	\$50
\$900	\$300	\$75	\$25
Other \$	A GIFT AT ANY LEVEL IS HELPFUL AND APPRECIATED.		



METHODS of GIVING

ACH - Automatic withdrawal from checking or savings

Set up an automatic withdrawal from your checking or savings account. This option allows you to make a one-time pledge and have payments automatically deducted, so you don't have to remember to make each installment.

Credit or debit card

Using your credit or debit card is a simple and convenient method. You can easily manage and automate your payments. If you use a rewards card, you may even earn points for your contribution.

Cash/check by mail or Bill Pay

For those who prefer to give by cash or check, we will provide envelopes and send reminders throughout the year to help you stay on track with your giving.

Stocks and securities

The transfer of stocks and securities is an attractive method of payment to many and may have significant tax benefits for the donor.

Please find a form and contact information for making these types of gifts at youwillbemywitnesses.org/give

MAKING A GIFT THAT IS MEANINGFUL TO YOU

Choosing the right gift plan is a personal decision that depends on your financial situation and long-term goals. Since IRS rules for donation tax incentives can be complex and every individual's circumstances are unique, we encourage you to consult with your financial adviser or tax professional to determine the giving method that works best for you.

Grain and other commodities

Donating grain or other agricultural commodities can be a tax-efficient way to support your parish and the diocese while reducing taxable income.

Corporate/Company matching gifts

Many companies match charitable employee gifts. Check with your employer to see if there is a matching program available to increase your gift.

For each of the preceding methods, please provide payment information on your pledge card or visit youwillbemywitnesses.org/give for more information and/or to set up the payment online.



"Whether it's brick or mortar, programing, evangelizing, it takes resources. And when we all as Catholics are committed to our faith, we're willing to invest in the future. And that's what this campaign is all about, investing in the future of the Diocese of Rockford."

TOM AND KATHY GIOVINGO
Campaign Chairs



CAMPAIGN LEADERSHIP

Steering Committee

The Most Reverend David J. Malloy, *Bishop of Rockford*
Rev. Msgr. Glenn L. Nelson, *Vicar General*
Mr. Ryan W. Blackney, *General Counsel*
Mrs. Claudia Broman, *Director – Office of Charitable Giving*
Mr. Kevin Fuss, *Director – Office of Research and Planning*
Mrs. Ellen B. Lynch, *Retired General Counsel*
Mrs. Jodi Rippon, *Director – Office of Finance and Administration*
Mrs. Penny Wiegert, *Director – Office of Communications*

Campaign Chairs

Tom and Kathy Giovingo
Jim Adrian

Supporting Personnel

Jody Dal Santo
Margarita Mendoza
Sue Paulsen

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youwillbemywitnesses.org



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“When I think of those who are witnesses, I think of those who have truly received from the Lord and are willing to become a conduit that we, too, might meet and receive the person of Jesus.”

FATHER ROBERT BLOOD
*Assistant Principal
Boylan High School, Rockford*