

IMPACT

Report

2025



CATHOLIC COMMUNITY
FOUNDATION

Enriching Lives In Northeast Ohio





CATHOLIC COMMUNITY FOUNDATION

Enriching Lives In Northeast Ohio

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EXPANDING FORMATION

for the Future of the Church

2025 IMPACT Report

The mission of the Catholic Community Foundation is to foster faith-based stewardship in the community for the spiritual, educational and charitable needs of all. We support the advancement of the work of the Church in Northeast Ohio, ensuring that our investments and grant recipients are in alignment with the teachings and values of the Catholic Church. We help donors continue the mission of Jesus to transform the world by connecting their support to ministries and services that lift up the Catholic community as well as the entire community. Our public trust is earned through the integrity of our work and strength of our partnerships. We are a non-profit 501(c)(3) with a Board of Directors that includes religious and community leaders.



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Fr. Robert W. Wisniewski, Jr.

COVER PHOTO:

New Teacher Compensation Grant Program established to invest in Catholic elementary school teachers

FAITH IN ACTION: A *Flourishing Church*



Dear sisters and brothers in Christ,

As I reflect on the blessings of this past year, I am deeply grateful for the faithful generosity that continues to strengthen the Church throughout Northeast Ohio. Last year, we celebrated the 25th anniversary of the Catholic Community Foundation – a meaningful milestone that gave us the opportunity to look back with gratitude for all that has been accomplished through the prayers, sacrifices, and stewardship of so many faithful people. At the same time, it invited us to look ahead with renewed hope for the future of our Church.

Every day, lives are being transformed through ministries that serve, educate, accompany, and form the people of God. Your support helps to ensure that families receive compassionate care, students receive a strong Catholic education, and future leaders of the Church are formed with wisdom and faith. Most importantly, your generosity helps create opportunities for people to encounter the love of Jesus Christ in meaningful and lasting ways.

In my pastoral letter, *A Flourishing Apostolic Church*, I invited the faithful of our diocese to embrace more fully the call to become a Church alive in prayer, evangelization, and service. That vision continues to guide us as we launch the *Called to Flourish: Our Church for the Future* campaign, an effort that will strengthen parishes, support ministries, and help us share the hope of the Gospel with the world around us.

Thank you for your continued prayers, generosity, and partnership in this mission. Because of you, the Church in Northeast Ohio continues to flourish in faith, hope, and charity.

Together, we are building a Church that will flourish now and well into the future. May God bless you and those you love.

Your brother in Christ,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Edward C. Malesic".

Most Reverend Edward C. Malesic, JCL
Bishop of Cleveland



Dear friends,

As we reflect on the past year, we do so with profound gratitude for all whose generosity continues to strengthen the mission of the Catholic Community Foundation. Last year's celebration of our 25th anniversary reminded us how much can be accomplished when people of faith come together to support the ministries of the Church throughout the Diocese of Cleveland.

This year's Impact Report highlights the many ways your support is transforming lives across Northeast Ohio. Through ministries that accompany families, strengthen Catholic education, support parish life, and form future leaders of the Church, your generosity is creating opportunities for people to encounter hope, compassion, and Christ-centered care.

Within these pages, you will read stories that demonstrate the lasting impact of faithful stewardship. You will see how families are receiving support and encouragement during critical moments in life, how Catholic schools are investing in both students and the teachers who guide them, and how innovative efforts in formation are preparing future priests and lay leaders to serve the Church for generations to come. You will also witness signs of a growing and vibrant Church as new members continue their journey into the Catholic faith.

Thank you for your trust, partnership, and faithful support. Because of you, this vital mission continues to flourish, bringing hope and opportunity to countless individuals and families across our diocesan community.

May God continue to bless you abundantly.

With gratitude,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Patrick Grace".

Patrick Grace
Executive Director

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Andy Rebholz".

Andy Rebholz
Board Chair

Help Me Grow Home Visiting

BUILDING CONFIDENCE, CONNECTION, AND A STRONG START

Help Me Grow is a free program that serves pregnant women, new parents, and caregivers during the most critical years of a child's development. Offered throughout the eight counties of the Diocese of Cleveland, trained Catholic Charities home visitors provide regular in-home visits that focus on parenting education, child development support and connection to community resources. The program strengthens families from the inside out – helping parents build confidence and stability to create nurturing environments where young children can thrive.

Through these visits, caregivers can ask questions and receive guidance on topics tailored to their specific needs, such as healthy pregnancy, feeding and nutrition, and developmental milestones. As relationships deepen over time, home visitors become trusted partners, helping families navigate both daily concerns and more complex challenges.

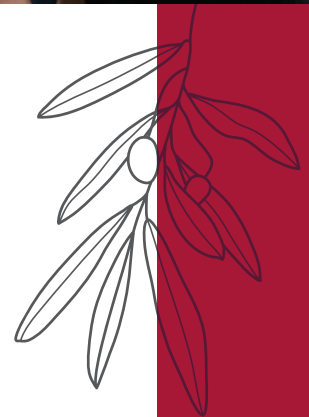
“Home visiting is really about building relationships rooted in trust,” said Heather Stoll, Chief Implementation Officer of Catholic Charities. “When families feel supported and not judged, they’re more open to learning, growing and building the skills they need to succeed.”

For one young mother, that partnership became a turning point. She entered the



program at 18 years old while navigating a high-risk pregnancy, finishing high school and living in unstable housing. With the guidance of her Catholic Charities home visitor, she set goals and worked steadily toward them. She earned her high school diploma, secured full-time employment, and welcomed a healthy baby. Over time, she moved into more stable housing and continued building a strong foundation for her family's future.

Help Me Grow also supports caregivers facing unexpected life transitions. One





grandfather entered the program after becoming the primary caregiver for his infant grandson. With guidance from his home visitor, he received essential supplies, learned age-appropriate developmental activities, and gained confidence in caring for a young child. As his skills grew, so did his comfort engaging in community settings with his grandson. Today, the child is thriving in a Head Start program.

In another case, a mother facing housing instability and unemployment worked closely with her home visitor to develop a plan for stability. Within weeks, she secured employment and began saving for permanent housing. As her circumstances improved, she reported reduced stress and

more meaningful time with her children – demonstrating the program’s impact on both parent and child well-being.

These experiences highlight a clear outcome: early support helps families build stability, strengthen relationships, and move toward long-term self-sufficiency.

Help Me Grow home visiting is one of many ways Catholic Charities fulfills its mission of serving people in need and strengthening families throughout the diocese. Home visitors meet people where they are, offering compassionate, nonjudgmental support with deep respect for their dignity.

The results are both immediate and lasting. Children are better prepared for school. Parents gain confidence in their ability to care for and guide their children. Families grow stronger together.

Generous donor support, raised through the Catholic Charities Appeal and administered by the Catholic Community Foundation, sustains and expands this important work. Because of that, families across the diocese receive the guidance, encouragement, and resources they need during the earliest – and most important – years of children’s lives.

Heather Stoll summarized it best, “When we support parents early, we are helping to create a foundation that positively impacts a child’s entire future.” 



“*When families feel supported and not judged, they’re more open to learning, growing and building the skills they need to succeed.*”

HEATHER STOLL,
CHIEF IMPLEMENTATION OFFICER,
CATHOLIC CHARITIES

Help Me Grow *at a glance*



Available in all 8 counties
the Diocese of Cleveland serves



FREE Program
for Families



Personalized
In-Home Support



Focused on
Early Childhood Development



Parenting Education
& Resources



Builds Stability
for Long-Term Success

Strengthening Catholic Education *through our teachers*

The strength of Catholic education begins with the dedication of its teachers.

With these words at the 2025 Alleluia Ball, Bishop Malesic captured a truth deeply felt across the Diocese of Cleveland.

The biennial Alleluia Ball, hosted by the Catholic Community Foundation, carried the inspiring theme “Empowering Educators, Students & Innovation.” The gala raised critical funds to strengthen Catholic schools; the Alleluia Ball has always raised money to provide tuition assistance for students, but this marked the first time it also raised funds to support teachers.

“The Alleluia Ball has a rich tradition of celebrating our Catholic faith and philanthropy,” Bishop Malesic shared. “This event supports our dedicated Catholic teachers and students, who are a tremendous blessing to the Church in Northeast Ohio. The generosity of our guests provides vital financial resources that directly shape the future of our students.”

In that spirit, the diocese has introduced the **Teacher Compensation Grant Program**, an initiative designed to recognize and support the educators who faithfully serve in our Catholic elementary schools. Rooted in the vision of the *Keeping the Faith Strategic Plan* and launched through the generosity of Alleluia Ball supporters, this subsidy represents a significant step toward more competitive teacher compensation across the diocese.

This program acknowledges a simple but urgent reality: teacher compensation matters. It influences the ability to attract and retain talented educators, who deliver the high quality of instruction that is essential for the long-term success of students. While many schools

in the diocese have made strides to expand teacher compensation, others continue to face obstacles in doing so.

The Teacher Compensation Grant Program is designed to help bridge that gap.

As the sixth-largest Catholic school system in the nation, the Diocese of Cleveland serves more than 40,221 students across 108 schools. This new initiative reflects the diocese’s continued commitment to strengthening Catholic education and supporting the teachers who help make that mission possible each day.

An initial allocation of funds will be distributed for the 2026–2027 school year, prioritizing Catholic elementary schools with the greatest demonstrated financial need, based on operational reporting, while a formal application process is developed. This early investment reflects both a responsiveness to current challenges and a commitment to building a stronger, more sustainable future.

Looking ahead, the long-term vitality of the Teacher Compensation Grant Program will be secured through a dedicated endowment – made possible by the diocese’s *Called to Flourish: Our Church for the Future* capital campaign (story, page 19). Through this effort, donor support will ensure that Catholic school teachers are not only appreciated but meaningfully supported for generations to come.

The Teacher Compensation Grant Program is more than a financial commitment – it is a statement of values. By investing in Catholic school teachers, the diocese affirms its belief in the enduring mission of Catholic education and the vital role educators play in forming young people in faith, knowledge, and service. Through this commitment, Catholic educators will continue to have the resources, formation, and support they need to guide the next generation. 

“*Catholic education nurtures the whole person — mind, body, and soul — but it is our teachers who make that possible. They are mentors, role models, and spiritual companions on the journey of learning... When we invest in our teachers, we are investing in the future of our students.*”

MOST REV. EDWARD C. MALESIC, BISHOP



40,221+
CATHOLIC STUDENTS

The Diocese of Cleveland operates the 6th largest Catholic school system in the United States



108
CATHOLIC SCHOOLS

There are 108 Catholic schools in the eight-county Diocese of Cleveland



Funding
SPECIFIC TO
TEACHERS CREATED

2025 Alleluia Ball raises funds for teacher support for the first time



Sustainable
GRANT PROGRAM

New grant program supports Catholic teacher compensation across the diocese

EXPANDING FORMATION

for the Future of the Church

Saint Mary Seminary and Graduate School of Theology in Wickliffe was recently awarded a nearly \$9 million matching grant from Lilly Endowment Inc. through its highly competitive Pathways for Tomorrow Initiative – positioning the seminary among a select group of theological schools across the United States and Canada advancing innovative approaches to pastoral formation.

The grant supports large-scale collaboration among seminaries, universities, and Church organizations to address the most pressing challenges facing Christian communities today – especially the need for well-formed pastoral leaders.

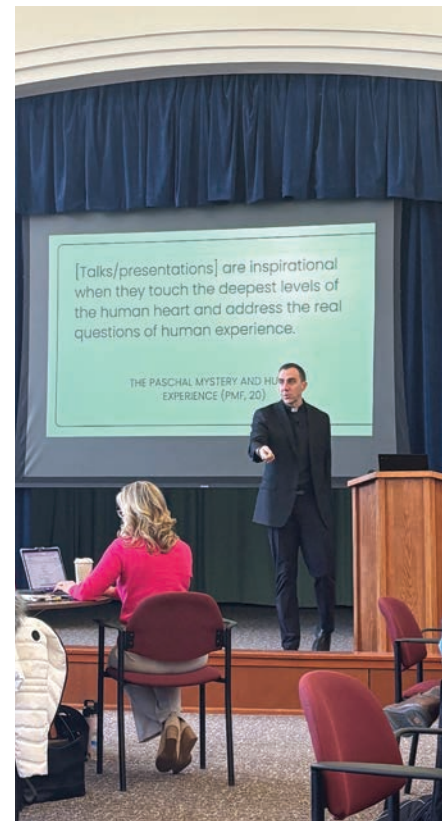
“The Catholic Church faces an urgent and immediate need for equipping ministerial leaders, particularly in communities underrepresented by ordained clergy,” said Father Andrew Turner, president/rector. “This grant allows us to expand that work in meaningful and lasting ways.”

Through the Mary, Mother of the Good Shepherd Institute, Saint Mary Seminary will expand formation in three key areas: strengthening the preparation of seminarians and deacon candidates through collaborative programs with parishes and partner seminaries; equipping lay men and women through intellectual and pastoral formation programs offered in parishes across the diocese; and inspiring high school and college students through summer programs, internships, mentoring, and retreats that introduce them to ministry and parish leadership.

The grant provides \$4.5 million for program development over five years and \$4.4 million in endowment support, with the matching funds being raised through the Catholic Community Foundation’s *Called to Flourish: Our Church for the Future* capital campaign (story, page 19).

This national investment builds on a strong foundation established in recent years. Through the *Heart of a Shepherd Campaign*, Saint Mary Seminary completed significant renovations to its student residences, classrooms, and chapel – enhancements made possible through generous donor support that strengthened the seminary’s capacity for priestly and diaconal formation. That renewed environment, combined with a proven track record of successful Lilly Endowment initiatives, helped position the seminary to attract this level of national funding and expand its impact.

For more than 175 years, Saint Mary Seminary has formed men for the priesthood and the permanent diaconate, while also preparing lay men and women for leadership in ministry. Today, through the Mary, Mother of the Good Shepherd Institute, that mission is reaching even further by creating new opportunities to form clergy, equip lay leaders, and inspire young people to serve the Church for years to come. [IN](#)





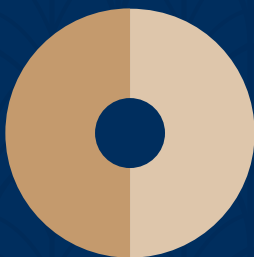
Pathways for Tomorrow Initiative:

\$8.9 Million

Matching Grant Award

\$4.5 Million

Program
Development
Funding



\$4.4 Million

Endowment Support

5 Years

of Expanded Formation Programming

3 Formation Pathways

Clergy • Lay Leaders • Young Adults

175+ Years

of Seminary Formation

*Your generosity helps form the hearts, minds,
and hands of those who will build a stronger,
more vibrant Church for generations to come.*

DONOR *Spotlight*



MAKING AN IMPACT

Their gift is supporting ministries that align with their values—helping to form faithful leaders, strengthen Catholic education and bring hope to those in need.



LARRY AND MARY KENNARD

Giving Back with Purpose:

Faith, Stewardship, and the Benefits of IRA Giving

Larry grew up in Bedford, Ohio, where he and his brother attended public schools before graduating from Bedford High School. Their Catholic formation came through CCD – now known as PSR – at St. Mary Parish.

After graduating from John Carroll University, Larry taught math at Padua Franciscan High School for four years before entering the financial services field. He founded Kennard Financial Services and became a certified financial planner. Today, the firm – located in Garfield Heights – includes five advisors and three staff members, with one of the Kennards' sons now working alongside him.

Mary built her own career in healthcare, recently retiring after many years as a pediatric nurse practitioner with MetroHealth. She and Larry have been married for 42 years and share a family that includes four grown children – two daughters and two sons – and seven grandchildren.

Mary attended Catholic school for all 12 years of her education – first at Blessed Sacrament Elementary and later at Lourdes Academy – an experience that helped shape her strong and lasting faith. Over the years, her example also encouraged Larry to become more deeply involved in parish life and Catholic philanthropy.

The Kennards are active members of St. Basil the Great Parish. Even after moving from Brecksville to Richfield, they chose to remain part of the parish community that has meant so much to them over the years.

“Our Catholic faith is very important to us,” Larry said. “Mary especially has been a big influence on me in that regard.”

Both Larry and Mary served as Eucharistic Ministers at St. Basil. Larry has served on the parish finance council for nearly three decades, while Mary previously served as president of the parish council, and now chairs a prayer shawl ministry. The Kennards generously support a number of Catholic organizations including St. Basil's, Catholic Charities, the Catholic Community Foundation's Angel Scholarship Fund, and Larry established a named scholarship at his alma mater, John Carroll University.

“We've been fortunate in our lives and careers,” Larry said. “When you've been blessed in that way, it's important to give back.”

As a Certified Financial Planner, Larry is also passionate about helping others discover thoughtful ways to support the organizations they care about. One strategy he often encourages donors to consider is giving through a Qualified Charitable Distribution (QCD) from an Individual Retirement Account.

“Anyone who is over age 70½ and planning to make charitable contributions anyway should really consider giving through their IRA,” Larry explained. “It's one of the most tax-efficient ways to support the organizations you care about.”

With a QCD, a donor directs funds from their IRA straight to a qualified charity. Because the distribution goes directly to the organization, it is not counted as taxable income for the donor. This can be especially beneficial for donors who take the standard deduction rather than itemizing their charitable gifts. QCDs can also help satisfy Required Minimum Distributions (RMDs), making them a natural fit for year-end giving.

For the Kennards, this approach is simply another way to be thoughtful stewards of the gifts they've received – supporting the ministries that matter most to them.

“We've always believed it's important to give back to the Church and to others,” Mary said. “This is just one more way we can do that in a meaningful and thoughtful way.” 

*Thank you, Larry and Mary,
for your faithful stewardship and
lasting example of generosity.*

GIVING SOCIETY *Donors*

The Catholic Community Foundation gratefully recognizes the following donors whose generosity during calendar year 2025 supported one or more diocesan ministries, including Catholic Charities, Catholic education, priestly formation, and other ministries serving the Church in Northeast Ohio. Their faithful stewardship helps advance the mission of the Diocese of Cleveland and makes a lasting impact in the lives of those we serve.

This listing reflects gifts received between January 1 and December 31, 2025, and excludes campaign and special event contributions. Every effort has been made to ensure accuracy. If an error or omission has occurred, please accept our sincere apologies and notify us so that we may correct our records.

Caritas Society

\$50,000 OR MORE ANNUALLY

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Mrs. Eva Dolan
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Mr. James W. Clark
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Crosier Guild

\$25,000 TO \$49,999 ANNUALLY

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\$10,000 TO \$24,999 ANNUALLY

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Mr. Robert J. Andrews, Jr.
Mr. and Mrs. Patrick V. Auletta
Mr. and Mrs. Mark Bachmann
Mr. and Mrs. Ronald G. Barber
Mr. and Mrs. Franklin S. Barry, Jr.
Mr. and Mrs. Ronald R. Bassak
Mrs. Martha Bauschka
Dr. and Mrs. James Bekeny
Mrs. Barbara Bell
Miss Vida Berlec
Ralph and Marianne Betters
John and Irene Blakemore

Mitre Society

\$5,000 - \$9,999 ANNUALLY

Anonymous (28)
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Dr. and Mrs. Richard J. Zirm
Mr. and Mrs. Ronald A. Zucca
Mr. and Mrs. Jim Zupka



A GROWING CHURCH:

Bishop Malesic Welcomes More Than 1,000 in OCIA Journey

As Catholics throughout the Diocese of Cleveland entered the season of Lent, more than 1,000 men and women preparing to enter the Catholic Church marked an important milestone in their journey of faith during the annual Rite of Election. The Rite of Election is one of the most significant moments in the Order of Christian Initiation of Adults (OCIA), with catechumens and candidates formally called the “Elect.” Celebrated February 22 at Cleveland Public Auditorium, the liturgy brought together catechumens (those not yet baptized), candidates (those already baptized), family, and friends from across the diocese for a joyful celebration of faith and welcome.

Bishop Edward Malesic presided, joined by Auxiliary Bishop Michael Woost. The celebration included 491 catechumens and 538 candidates preparing to enter into full communion with the Catholic Church.

Because of the large number of participants, the liturgy was once again held at Cleveland Public Auditorium rather than the Cathedral of St. John the Evangelist. Nearly 4,000 people attended, including family members and friends supporting those preparing to receive the sacraments at the Easter Vigil.

“This has become our sacred space,” Bishop Malesic said as he welcomed those gathered.



4,000 ATTENDEES

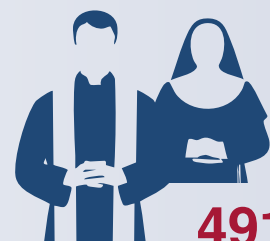


1,000+

**MEN AND WOMEN
PREPARING TO
ENTER THE
CATHOLIC CHURCH**



583
CANDIDATES



491
CATECHUMENS

Addressing the large gathering, Bishop Malesic reflected on his own faith journey and the importance of truly knowing Christ.

“I knew about Jesus, but I didn’t know him,” he said. “God never gave up on me and he won’t give up on you ... I opened my heart to Jesus and when I did, he came rushing in.”

He reminded those preparing for the sacraments that faith is both gift and lifelong commitment.

“Faith leads us to heaven, where our destiny is to be made into saints,” he said. “Sometimes lifelong Catholics forget about faith, which is why you candidates and catechumens are such a gift to us. You help to wake us up and remind us that we have such a treasure in our faith.”

That journey reached its culmination at the Easter Vigil on Holy Saturday, April 4, where new members were welcomed into the Church at both the Cathedral of St. John the Evangelist and their local parishes – the culmination of months of formation and preparation.

At the Cathedral, the Vigil began in darkness before the Paschal candle was lit, the flame was shared and the church was gradually filled with light. The new Catholics received the sacraments of initiation: baptism, confirmation, and Holy Communion. Auxiliary Bishop Woost and several priests concelebrated.

“This is a special night,” Bishop Malesic said. “You remind us of the great gift of our faith.”

He reminded the congregation that the Resurrection is not only remembered but lived. “The Resurrection is not just about Jesus, it’s also about us ... death is no longer the end of the road for those who believe in Him. Our future was made possible because Jesus rose from the dead,” he said.

The growing number of people entering the Church throughout the Diocese of Cleveland is a visible sign of renewal in parish communities across Northeast Ohio. Through prayer, study, worship, and the witness of sponsors, catechists, clergy, and fellow parishioners, participants in OCIA are discovering a deeper relationship with Christ and a place within the life of the Church. 



Learn More:

On June 18, 2026, the Archdiocese of Chicago, in collaboration with 19 other dioceses—including the Diocese of Cleveland—released *Why Are So Many People Becoming Catholic?*, a national study examining the experiences and

motivations of 2,127 OCIA participants across the United States. The report can be accessed at catholiccommunity.org/OCIAreport.



CALLED *to* FLOURISH

OUR CHURCH FOR THE FUTURE

For more than 150 years, the Catholic Diocese of Cleveland has remained steadfast in faith and committed to forming Christ-centered lives. Today, we are called to deepen that mission by strengthening the places where faith is lived – our parishes, schools, ministries, and most importantly, our people.

To answer this call, the Diocese has launched **Called to Flourish: Our Church for the Future**. Anchored in Bishop Malesic's pastoral letter, *A Flourishing Apostolic Church*, this initiative invites all Catholics to grow as missionary disciples – encountering Christ more deeply and living out that faith through worship, evangelization, and service.

Called to Flourish supports four key priorities:

- **PARISHES:** Sustaining parish communities, the epicenter of our faith.
- **WORSHIP:** Caring for the sacred spaces and individuals within our ministry.
- **EVANGELIZATION:** Strengthening Catholic education and inspiring hearts to grow in faith.
- **SERVICE:** Continuing the mission of Jesus by responding to those in need.

Launched in 2025, the campaign is currently underway with its initial pilot phase. As of December 31, 2025, \$31 million has been raised in support of this transformative effort.

In the coming years, parishes across the Diocese will be invited to participate.

To learn more, visit:

www.catholiccommunity.org/calledtoflourish.

FINANCIAL *Highlights*

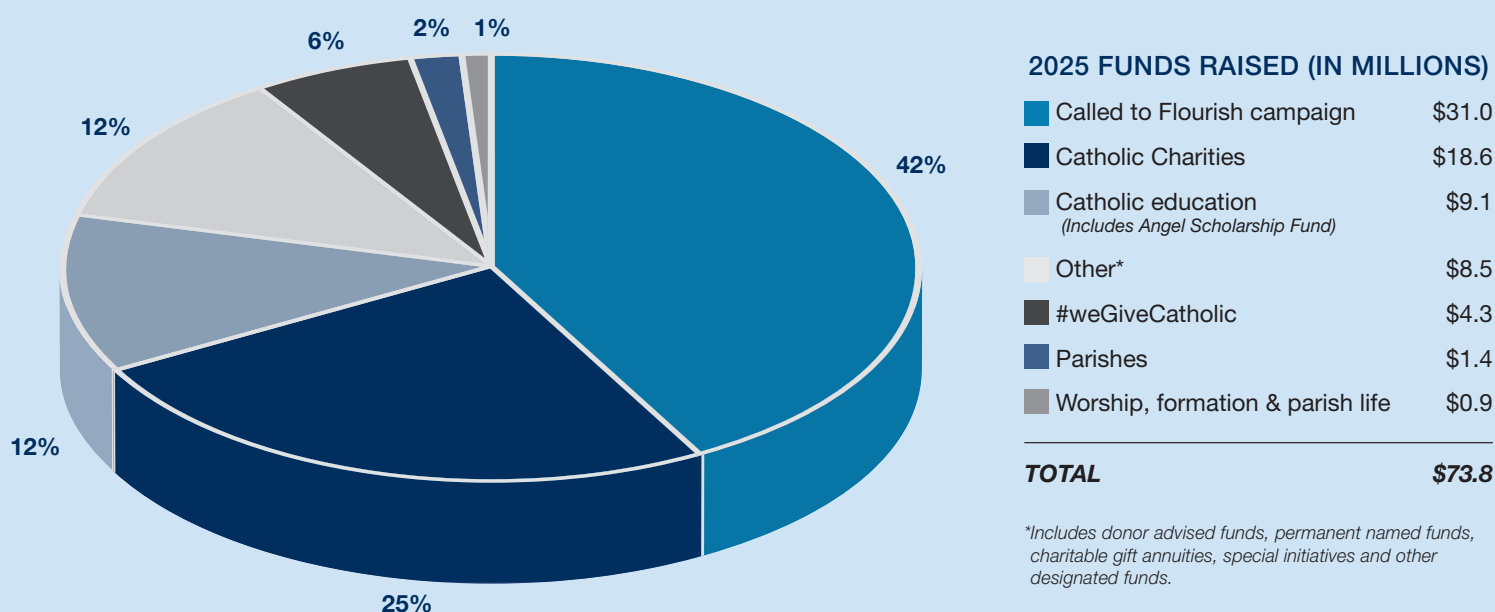
The following summary of financial information is derived from the audited financial statement of activities for the year ending Dec. 31, 2025. The full audited financial statement is available online at <https://www.catholiccommunity.org/financials>.

The Catholic Community Foundation's long-term investments are held in a 60% equity/40% fixed income investment portfolio that is screened in accordance with the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) guidelines for Catholic socially responsible investing (guidelines at www.usccb.org). The Foundation places great importance on risk reduction through strategic asset allocation and style diversification. The risk vs. return potential of 60% equity/40% fixed income asset allocation is consistent with the Foundation's investment return, risk tolerance, and distribution guidelines.

2025	\$73,800,000
2024	\$57,500,000
2023	\$38,700,000

Fundraising Totals

Fundraising totals include unrealized revocable and irrevocable planned gifts which are not reflected in the audited financial statements.



Distributions

Monies from annual appeals, planned gifts, endowed and non-endowed funds as well as other fundraising events, initiatives, and campaigns.

2025 DISTRIBUTIONS (IN MILLIONS)

Catholic Charities	\$20.1
Catholic education	\$15.7
Other	\$14.3
<i>Called to Flourish</i> , worship, formation & parish life	\$2.9
Parishes	\$0.7
Heart of a Shepherd campaign	\$0.7

TOTAL **\$55.2**

TOTAL

2025	\$55,200,000
2024	\$51,900,000
2023	\$39,100,000

2025 OPERATING EXPENSES

Fundraising <i>(includes Called to Flourish)</i>	\$6,247,198
Other Operating	\$912,022
Administrative	\$329,007

TOTAL **\$7,488,227**

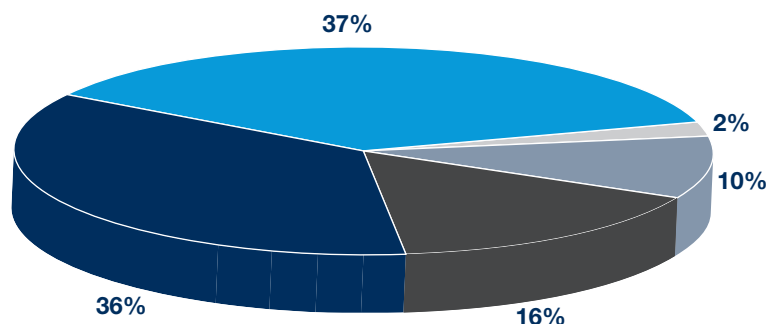
RETURNS ENDING DECEMBER 31	2023	2024	2025
Catholic Community Foundation actual, net of fees	14.78%	11.76%	13.54%
Blended benchmark	15.35%	11.9%	14.60%
Difference	-0.57%	-0.14%	-1.06%

Managed Portfolio Asset Allocation

2025 (IN MILLIONS)

Total Large Cap Equity	\$77.6
Total Fixed Income <i>(includes REIT)</i>	\$75.3
Total International Equity	\$33.5
Total Small Cap Equity	\$21.7
Total Cash	\$3.8

TOTAL **\$211.9**

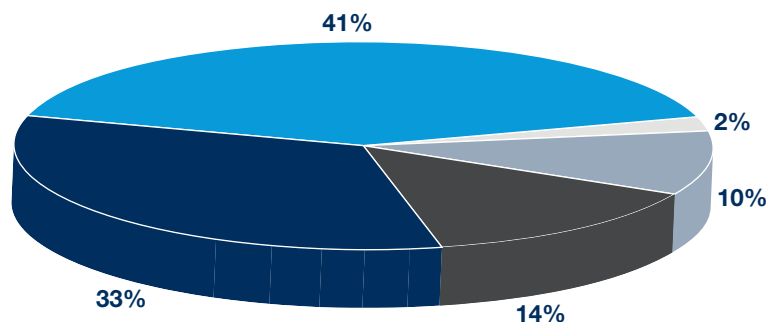


Managed Portfolio Program Allocation

2025 (IN MILLIONS)

Catholic education	\$87.4
Catholic Charities	\$69.5
Parishes & schools	\$30.5
Other <i>(i.e., Donor Advised Funds, Named Endowment Funds, etc.)</i>	\$20.2
Worship, formation & parish life	\$4.2

TOTAL **\$211.8**





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Bishop of Cleveland

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Mr. Patrick J. Grace

Executive Director,
Catholic Community Foundation

**In grateful memory of our first Chairman of the Board, who entered eternal life on June 1, 2026, at the age of 92.
We remember with gratitude his faithful leadership and enduring legacy. May he rest in peace.*



PRIESTS' ADVISORY COUNCIL

Spotlight

FR. ROBERT W.
WISNIEWSKI, JR.

Please tell us a little about yourself.

I attended St. Mary Magdalene Elementary School then graduated from Lake Catholic High School. I entered Borromeo Seminary after high school graduation, then studied at St. Mary Seminary and was ordained in 1989 by Bishop Anthony Pilla. My father passed away six years ago, and my mother is a parishioner at St. Mary of the Assumption in Mentor. I have a sister in Austin, Texas, along with a nephew and niece, and a great-nephew and a great-niece.

What is your current parish? Previous parishes?

I currently serve as pastor of St. Bridget of Kildare Parish in Parma and Mary Queen of the Apostles Parish in Brook Park. My previous assignments include Our Lady of Guadalupe in Macedonia, St. Albert the Great in North Royalton, St. Augustine in Barberton, and St. Patrick in West Park.

Who is your favorite saint & why?

Different saints have spoken to me at various stages in my life. Serving for 21 years as pastor at St. Bridget of Kildare, I've been especially inspired by her profound love for the poor and generous spirit. I must also include our Blessed Mother – my priesthood has been wrapped in her loving care, from my first assignment at Our Lady of Guadalupe to my current service at Mary Queen of the Apostles.

What is something readers should know about you?

Plain and simple: I love the people I serve and will be eternally grateful for every parish assignment I've received in this diocese. Outside of parish ministry I thoroughly enjoy vegetable gardening, landscaping, and studying the weather – all lifelong hobbies.

When did you join the Catholic Community Foundation's Priests' Advisory Council?

I was invited by Bishop Nelson J. Perez in December 2018 for what was initially a three-year term – and I am now serving my third term.

Please share some things the PAC advises on.

The PAC offers input on a wide range of diocesan initiatives. Early on, we helped shape the *Heart of a Shepherd* campaign, designed to raise funds for the renovation of our seminaries. We advised on its name, goals, parish participation, and use of funds. We've also reviewed efforts like the Angel Scholarship Fund, digital offertory tools, The Catholic Charities Annual Appeal, and trends in offertory giving and Catholic school enrollment. Diocesan leadership is highly receptive to our input, and I'm continually impressed by the collective wisdom of the PAC.

Why do you serve on the PAC?

I serve on the PAC namely because I see the good work of the Church in Cleveland, wholeheartedly believe in the Church's mission, and am honored to play a part in seeing that this good work continues.

Please share a little about how the PAC advised on the Called to Flourish: Our Church for the Future capital campaign over the last year or so.

I think we have been studying this campaign initiative for about two years. When it was proposed by diocesan leadership, the necessity, timing, and potential outcomes were all examined. We discussed current diocesan needs, the parish share in the campaign, and we reviewed the various "wave" assignments for individual parishes – including changes in their assignments and coupling the campaign with other major fund-raising projects. It has been a thoughtful and collaborative process. 

The Priests' Advisory Council (PAC) of the Catholic Community Foundation is comprised of pastors/priests representing a diverse Catholic population, both geographically and socioeconomically. This group of committed clergy meets two or three times a year to review Catholic Community Foundation initiatives and then offers feedback to its executive director, staff, and board of directors.



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Enriching Lives In Northeast Ohio



PATRICK GRACE

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MARY LOU OZIMEK

Assistant Executive Director
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mozimek@catholiccommunity.org

Since its inception, the Catholic Community Foundation has raised nearly **\$700 million** to support Catholic Charities, education, priestly formation, and parish life across the Diocese of Cleveland. The Foundation remains a **beacon of hope**, rooted in faith and committed to continuing its mission of service for generations to come.