

Proposal for Establishing a Diocesan Benefactor Fund (DBF) for the Archdiocese of Washington

Purpose:

1. to reduce the financial strain on the small number of parishes and missions, which currently carry the full burden of funding the Archdiocese of Washington;
2. to develop greater awareness at the individual and family level of the diocese's activities, as well as the special needs of particular churches, clergy, individuals, or ministries within the diocese, thereby fostering an increased sense of togetherness, providing stewardship/charitable opportunities, and strengthening the unity of the Archdiocese of Washington;
3. to increase the contributor pool by encouraging the families, individuals and other entities (businesses, organizations, institutions, etc.) to financially support the Archdiocese of Washington.

Method:

Elect a committee, consisting of clergy and lay people (the chancellor and treasurer being ex-officio members) from within the Archdiocese of Washington, at each annual diocesan assembly for the purpose of overseeing the DBF. The committee would be subject to the diocesan council and be tasked with:

1. generating awareness and support for the DBF, through presentations at parishes and missions, the website, a mailing list, and other forms of communication;
2. encouraging both earmarked and unrestricted donations at various levels of stewardship, for example: \$1 to \$99, \$100 - \$499, \$500 to \$999, etc.;
3. receiving donations into the diocesan treasury and enrolling donors on the benefactor list; posted as the name of the donor, "for the health/repose of...", or anonymous.
4. issuing letters of thanks and appropriate tax-related documentation for donations.
5. ensuring that earmarked funds are distributed in a timely manner and as specified;
6. discerning how unrestricted funds should be held and/or distributed;
7. reporting the account balance as well as all income to and expenditures from the DBF, both earmarked and unrestricted, through the website, mailing list, regular diocesan council meetings, and the annual diocesan assembly.

The DBF account would be secured and audited as all other diocesan financial holdings.