

Frequently Asked Questions about becoming a donor

Why do I need the Foundation? I already give to charity, and to my parish church.

Today's increasingly complex tax regulations and society's myriad needs, both human and spiritual, complicate most simple acts of charity. How can we know we're doing what's best for our families and for our church and our community? How can we be sure we've optimized the tax advantages of charitable giving? How will we know our money is invested well and used wisely? Can we be certain our charitable wishes are being honored?

The Catholic Foundation addresses these issues – and often, several others – to maximize the effect of your generosity and express the highest form of Catholic philanthropy. If you bring the impulse to give to the table, the officers and staff of The Catholic Foundation can bring everything else – sophisticated legal and financial expertise, accountability in the charitable community, and sustainability.

Plus, The Catholic Foundation offers “one-stop charitable giving,” with a variety of plans that continue current donations to your parish or Catholic school while at the same time planning for longer-term gifts and for making the Catholic community part of your will or estate plan.

Does the Foundation displace my lawyer and financial advisor?

Not at all. The Catholic Foundation works closely with all professional advisors to create only the charitable giving component of your financial and estate planning. With their knowledge and insight, we can develop a plan that is consistent with your overall personal, financial and spiritual goals, both currently and well into the future.

What kind of "plans" are available?

As a full-service philanthropic foundation, The Catholic Foundation offers an extensive range of options, each dependent on your personal resources and unique charitable objectives.

Four distinct types of gifts are accommodated:

1. An outright gift of cash or securities;
2. A charitable bequest;
3. A charitable gift annuity; and
4. A charitable remainder or charitable lead trust.

These, in turn, can be managed in a number of ways to optimize income and/or estate tax savings, to provide a secure income, to advance particular charitable interests, and/or to build the Catholic endowment and create an enduring legacy.

Your individualized plan may be as simple as a Donor-Advised Fund, created by an outright gift to The Catholic Foundation from which charitable donations can be distributed by the Foundation on your behalf. Or it may be as complex as a Charitable Remainder Trust, a sophisticated and flexible planning tool that combines significant tax advantages with an income stream for the donor at the same time it provides for benefits to accrue to charity.

Is The Catholic Foundation mostly for "Big Givers"?

No. The Catholic Foundation hopes everyone in the Catholic community will participate in the spirit of charitable giving and realize the effectiveness and efficiencies of this trusted community foundation. Gifts of any size are welcome, and indeed, essential to the Foundation's mission.

What if I have a family foundation already?

Private foundations and community foundations like The Catholic Foundation are not mutually exclusive; they may serve similar, although not identical purposes. But community foundations like The Catholic Foundation often afford greater tax advantages and distribution flexibility, and they assume the otherwise costly and time-consuming record-keeping and reporting responsibilities associated with private foundations. In addition, The Catholic Foundation brings a unique philanthropic focus to bear, thus providing donors with a way to build a particularly rich legacy in the Catholic community.

How much does this cost?

The services of The Catholic Foundation are priced comparably to, but slightly lower than most other charitable giving investment programs in this highly competitive market. There is, however, no fee for establishing a fund at The Catholic Foundation. Donors are generally charged a very small percentage, based on the size and type of their charitable funds, for management and administration. Fees are established in consultation with the Foundation professionals as initial arrangements are made.

How can I learn more about working with The Catholic Foundation?

We encourage you to set up an appointment to discuss your particular charitable intentions with a member of our professional staff. Together with your legal and financial advisors, we will work with you and your family to develop a successful and satisfying program for your faithful philanthropy.