Endowment Sunday Toolkit for Parishes

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"An endowment fund is a long-term investment and as we build up the fund than more interest comes about and more things can be done for parishes. It is a very worthy way of providing funding for the future life of parishes, especially small parishes."

- Fr. John Kieran

An Introduction to Endowment Sunday

What is an endowment?

An endowment fund helps ensure the future of the parish and sustain your mission now and forever. A gift to an endowment fund is never spent. Instead, the gifts are protected by law, professionally invested, and grow over time. Your parish is the sole beneficiary of your parish endowment fund.

As the value of the endowment fund grows, your parish receives an annual distribution grant that comes from the earnings of the fund. The distribution grant can be used in many ways to support the needs of your parish.

See Appendix A for an Overview of Endowment Funds.

What is Endowment Sunday?

- A chance to educate your parishioners about the importance of securing the financial well-being of the parish both now and forever
- An opportunity to encourage parishioners to leave the parish endowment fund in their will or estate plans

Why have an Endowment Sunday?

The Catholic Foundation conducted a parish survey and found that ***93% of parishioners were not aware or were unsure if their parish had an endowment fund***, BUT if the parish had an endowment, ***50% would be likely or very likely to contribute to it.***

- If your parish **is receiving distributions**, you also want your fund to grow so that you can ensure your parish is thriving now and in the future.
- If your parish **is not yet receiving distributions** from the endowment fund, you want your fund to grow so that you can rely on a stream of income going forward during insecure times.

An Endowment Sunday is an opportunity to educate your parish community about your endowment fund. It may include a second collection (recommended) or you may focus on educating your parish community about the endowment fund.

Psalm 116 says, “How can I repay the LORD for all the great good done for me?” Promoting your parish endowment fund is a way to help your parishioners leave a Catholic legacy and give back to God from the ways they’ve been blessed.

When have other parishes been successful in promoting their endowment or doing an Endowment Sunday?

- Parish feast day or the month of the parish feast day
- Month that is important or relevant to your parish
- Outside of other major fundraising efforts
- A “quieter time,” such as summer
- Archdiocesan Endowment Sunday

Who are the key players in a successful Endowment Sunday?

- Pastor
- Staff or volunteer who works on stewardship directives
- Staff or volunteer who works on communications, including the bulletin and website
- A Legacy Liaison or donor who has made a planned gift (a gift made in a will or estate plan)
- Staff or volunteer who is willing to coordinate the initiative

Endowment Sunday Checklist

- ☐ Connect the key players and have a meeting
- ☐ Choose a date for Endowment Sunday weekend
- ☐ Decide if your Endowment Sunday will be education only or education and a second collection
    - If you choose to do a collection, decide if you will use envelopes. The Catholic Foundation can provide you with endowment fund collection envelopes.
- ☐ Find a parishioner or parishioners to speak at all the Masses
- ☐ Follow the suggested Communications Timeline

“Who is a Christian steward? One who receives God’s gifts gratefully, cherishes and tends them in a responsible and accountable manner, shares them in justice and love with all, and returns them with increase to the Lord.

- U.S. Bishops' Pastoral Letter on Stewardship

Communications Timeframe

Four weeks prior

- Bulletin or enews: run the Basics of an Endowment Fund article that shares about your parish endowment fund and educates your parishioners on what an endowment fund is
    - Optional: in electronic communications, include a link to the What Is A Parish Endowment Fund? video or embed the video on your website.
- Ensure the legacy link to your parish endowment fund is on your website (a legacy link goes straight to your individual parish's endowment fund giving page on the Catholic Foundation's website)
- Add parish planned giving graphics to the website

Sample wording of different lengths and all the planned giving graphics are available on our Parish Resources webpage, cfnga.org/resources/parish-resources. Your legacy link is included in the quarterly reports sent to your parish. We're happy to send you the link if you have trouble finding it.

Three weeks prior

- Bulletin or enews: run An Endowment Fund Helps Our Parish In Future Generations article that outlines the importance of the parish endowment fund in the future
    - Optional: include the "How an Endowment Fund Works" graphic

Two weeks prior

- Bulletin or enews: run An Endowment Fund Helps Our Parish Now article that outlines the importance of the parish endowment fund now.
    - Optional: in electronic communications, include a link to the What Is A Parish Endowment Fund? video again or for the first time.

One week prior

- Bulletin and enews: run Next week is Endowment Sunday! article
- Social Media: post announcement "Next week is Endowment Sunday"
- Parish app: if you have one, include a promotion for Endowment Sunday
- Daily Mass: include a reminder announcement after daily Masses the week prior to Endowment Sunday

Weekend of

- Have a parishioner speak at each Mass using the script to share what is an endowment fund is, and why it is important now and in the future
- Include Support Our Parish Endowment Fund! article in your bulletin or enews
- Optional: second collection

After Endowment Sunday

- Optional: If you did a collection, announce the total received in gifts to the parish in the bulletin, enews, or announcement at Mass and thank them for their generosity
- When your parish receives their letter in March each year letting them know how much they are eligible to receive from their fund, share the amount with the parish.
    - If you parish is taking the grant distribution, let the parish know what it will be used for.
    - If your parish is not taking the grant distribution, let parishioners know the total and that your pastor and/or finance council and/or business manager have decided to keep the money invested so it will continue to grow for the future of the parish.
- Continue to promote your parish endowment fund with reminders in your bulletin, enews, website, etc.
    - The Catholic Foundation puts out monthly bulletin notes focused on gifts to endowment funds. Consider including them weekly or monthly in your bulletin. Visit cfnga.org/resources/parish-resources.
- Include information about the endowment fund in funeral planning resources. Parishioners may not consider the parish endowment fund as a place to have memorial gifts sent in lieu of flowers without you letting them know that it's an option.

Bulletin and E-Newsletter Articles

Below are four articles you can choose to run in your bulletin, enewsletter, or other methods of distribution. You could run all four or choose a couple – this toolkit provides the materials and resources and you select what to use.

The Basics of an Endowment Fund

Suggestion: run four weeks in advance of Endowment Sunday. This article provides a brief overview of an endowment fund.

Did you know that (name of parish) has an endowment fund? Not exactly sure what an endowment fund even is?

One important aspect of our Catholic stewardship is to provide for future generations. An endowment fund can accomplish that mission. Unlike our offertory collection or annual appeal which is used for immediate need, an endowment is held in an investment fund set aside for the long-term support of our parish.

Our endowment fund was created to ensure that our parish is able to financially sustain our mission to (add parish mission or tagline) long into the future.

Our endowment fund is intended to last forever. Gifts to our endowment fund are protected and never spent. As the market grows over time, the value of the gifts to our fund grow and produce earnings that can be used by our parish to meet current needs.

(Choose from the following options:)

> ***If you currently receive distributions:***
> We have used the distributions from our fund for projects such as (share an example or two of how the money has been used to benefit your parish).
>
> ***If you don't currently receive distributions:***
> Other parishes with endowment funds over $25,000 have used their distributions for parish needs such as new carpet, programs for children and teens, and ministry support.

Anyone can add to our parish endowment fund at any time. Our endowment fund is held at the Catholic Foundation of North Georgia in Atlanta and is invested and managed in accordance with Catholic values.

An Endowment Fund Helps Our Parish In Future Generations

Suggestion: run three weeks in advance of Endowment Sunday. This article shows how an endowment fund helps the parish in the future.

Our parish endowment fund ensures the vitality of our parish long into the future. Because an endowment fund is intended to last forever, gifts to the endowment fund are never spent. The fund continues to grow so that our parish has support for years to come to continue the work of Christ in our community.

As our parish grows physically and spiritually thanks to the grace of God, our needs may exceed our financial means. Our endowment is a way to stabilize our parish income now and in the future so that we can carry out the work of Christ in our community.

An Endowment Fund Helps Our Parish Now

Suggestion: run two weeks in advance of Endowment Sunday. This article shows how an endowment fund helps the parish right now.

Our parish endowment fund not only ensures that we can continue our mission to (add parish mission or tagline here) long into the future, but it ALSO helps our parish ***right now***.

(Choose from the following options:)

> ***If you currently receive distributions:***
> Because our endowment fund grows as the market grows, as a parish we are able to receive a distribution from the fund once a year if we choose.
>
> Recently, we have used the distributions from our fund for projects such as (share an example or two of how the money has been used to benefit your parish). We are able to support a current need without using our offertory and make our experience at (name of parish) more fulfilling today.
>
> ***If you don't currently receive distributions:***
> Because our endowment fund grows as the market grows, when our fund reaches $25,000, we will be able to receive a distribution from the fund once a year if the parish chooses.
>
> Other parishes have used the distributions from their endowment fund for projects around the parish such as updated technology in the office, teen mission trips, senior ministry materials, and more.

We will be able to support a current need without using our offertory and make our experience at (name of parish) more fulfilling today.

Next Week is Endowment Sunday!

Suggestion: run one week in advance of Endowment Sunday. This article educates parishioners on how they can support the endowment fund.

We at (name of parish) are celebrating our vibrant and growing community now and the community it will continue to be long into the future with an Endowment Sunday next week! Our endowment fund supports the mission of our parish long into the future. It ensures the financial stability and sustainability of our parish now and forever. The principal of the fund continues to grow over time – only the interest is spent on current needs of our parish.

How can you support our parish endowment fund?

- Make a gift now – You can make a gift of cash, appreciated stock, real estate, or other assets like a coin collection or jewelry. You can also give a one time or recurring online gift with a credit card or ACH payment. You can make a gift to the endowment fund in honor of or in memory of someone you love, a birthday, or an anniversary.
- Make a planned gift – you can make (name of parish) a full or partial beneficiary in your will or estate plans, life insurance policy, or retirement accounts like an IRA.
- Do both – You can also make a gift now and a planned gift in the future in thanksgiving for all that God has entrusted you with.

Thank you in advance for your support of (name of parish) both now and in the future with a gift to our endowment fund!

Support Our Parish Endowment Fund!

Suggestion: run on Endowment Sunday weekend.

This weekend is Endowment Sunday! If you missed previous articles, our parish has an endowment fund that supports our needs now and in the future. The endowment fund aids in the sustainability of our parish for current and future generations.

You can support our endowment fund through a current gift, such as a cash, check, or online donation via credit card or ACH transfer. You can also consider leaving a gift to the endowment fund in your will or estate plan. And, please pray for our parish, that we may continue to do God's work in our community for generations.

Mass Talk Script

Note: Ideally, a short talk would be given by a parishioner who has already made plans in their will for a gift to the parish endowment fund, or at least include a quote or story about why the parishioner made a planned gift in their will or estate plan. The parishioner may of course remain anonymous if they wish and still provide a quote or story. An endorsement from the priest before or after the talk is valuable.

Did you know that (name of parish) has an endowment fund? Are you not *exactly* sure what an endowment fund even is?

One important aspect of our Catholic stewardship is to provide for future generations. An endowment fund can accomplish that mission. Unlike our offertory collection or annual appeal which can be used immediately, an endowment is held in an investment fund set aside for the long-term support of our parish.

This fund was created to ensure that our parish is able to financially sustain our mission to (add parish mission or tagline here) long into the future.

Our endowment fund is intended to last forever. Gifts to our endowment fund are protected and never spent. As the market grows over time, gifts to our fund grow and produce earnings that can be used by our parish to meet current needs.

(Choose from the following options:)

> ***If you currently receive distributions:***
> We have used the distributions from our fund for projects such as (share an example or two of how the money has been used to benefit your parish).
>
> ***If you don't currently receive distributions:***
> Other parishes with endowment funds over $25,000 use their distributions for parish needs such as new carpet, programs for children and teens, or ministry support.

Anyone can add to our parish endowment fund at any time. Our endowment fund is held at the Catholic Foundation of North Georgia in Atlanta and is invested and managed in accordance with Catholic values.

Many parishioners find that remembering their parish in their will or estate planning is a way to thank the Lord for all of life's blessings. The Church has been a part of your life since Baptism, and the significant events throughout your life – from First Holy Communion, to Confirmation, perhaps to Marriage and beyond.

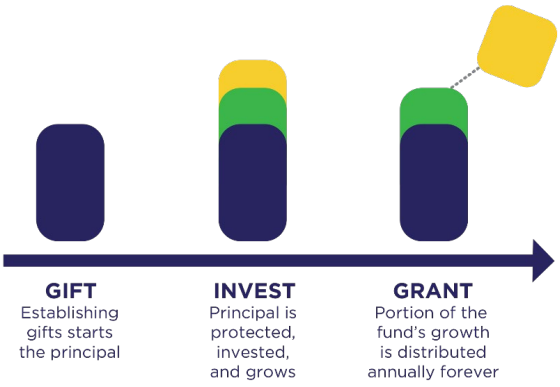
(Share story or quote by a parishioner who has made a planned gift)

A gift of *any size* to the parish endowment fund now, or a planned gift in the future through a will or estate plan, will ensure that you continue to be a part of the future of our parish, and will provide for the future needs of our parish and parishioners for generations to come. You do not have to be wealthy to make a difference. All of us giving what we can creates a Catholic legacy and returns to the Lord the blessings He has given us.

God bless you and thank you for your consideration.

Graphics

Visit cfnga.org/resources/parish-resources to download the graphics.

Visual representation of how an endowment fund works:	
How planned giving helps your parish	
Ways to grow an endowment fund	

Business Card Sized Graphic Bulletin Note	

Questions?

At the Catholic Foundation, our vision is ensuring that the Catholic community and its ministries have the financial resources to serve and make a difference in the lives of current and future generations. We welcome your calls, questions, and inquiries as we partner with you to support the current and long-term financial needs of your parish and parishioners.

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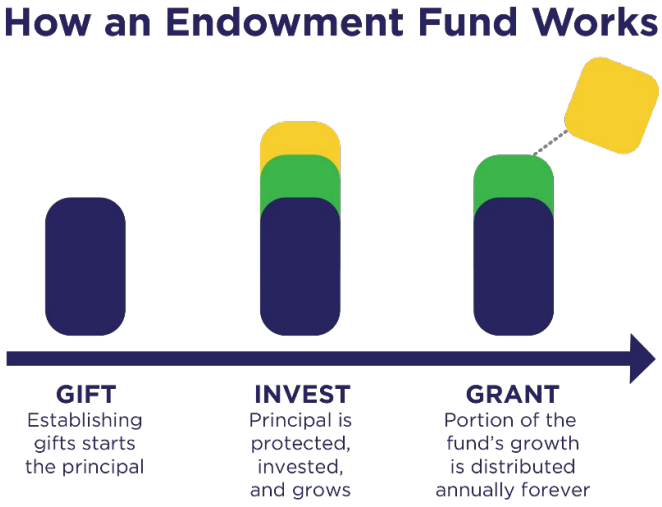
Appendix A: Overview of Endowment Funds

An endowment fund helps ensure the future of the parish and sustain your mission now and forever. A gift to an endowment fund is never spent. Instead, the gifts are protected by law, invested, and grow over time. Your parish endowment fund is held at the Catholic Foundation of North Georgia.

Your parish is the sole beneficiary of your parish endowment fund. Gifts to the fund are legally protected to only go to your parish.

As the value of the endowment fund grows, your parish receives an annual distribution grant that comes from the earnings of the fund. The distribution grant can be used in many ways to support the needs of your parish.

To ensure the sustainability of the fund, the current annual distribution is 4% of the rolling 20 quarter average of the market value of the fund.



Gift – navy bar shows the starting value of the fund (principal), and any subsequent gifts.

Invest – the light green and yellow bars demonstrate the market growth of the principal.

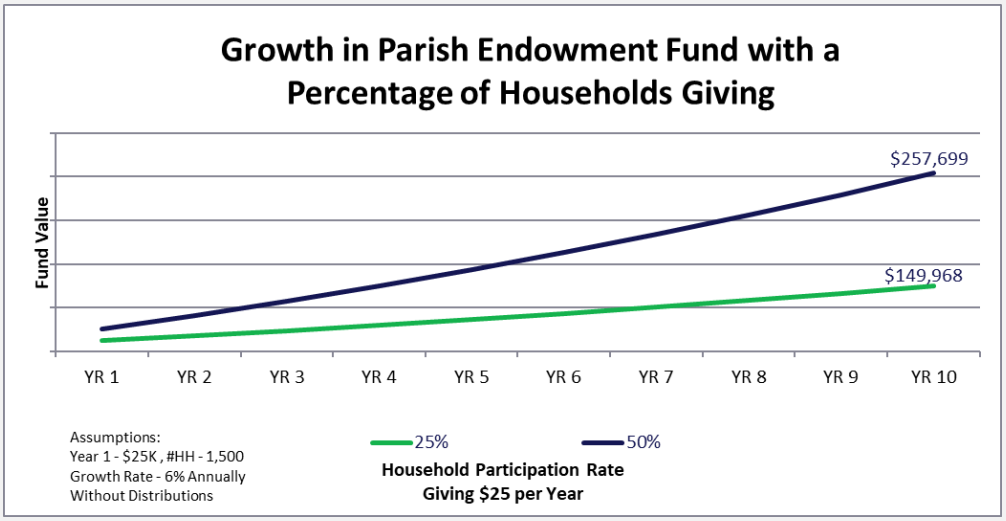
Grant – the yellow portion represents the annual grant distribution amount going to the parish.

Endowment funds are NOT:

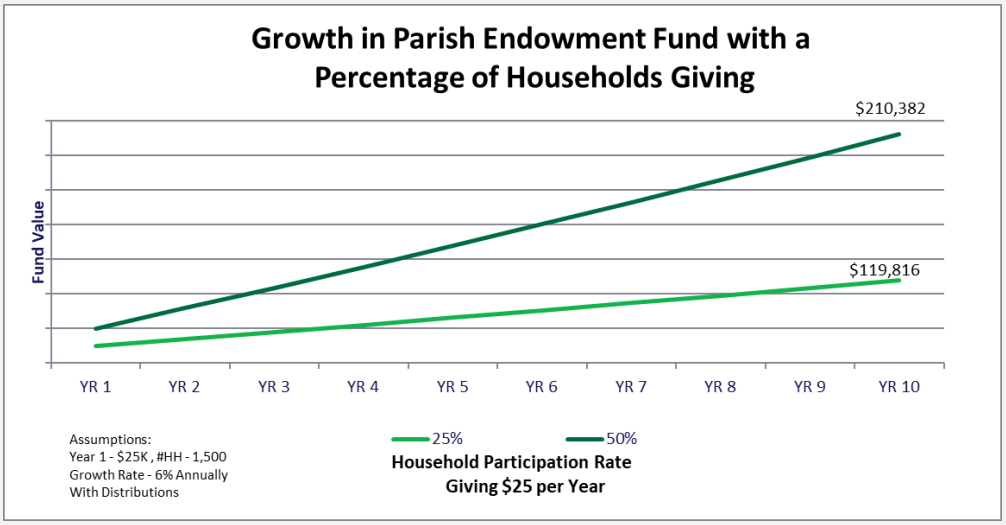
- Rainy day or reserve funds
- Maintenance funds or capital funds, although distributions may be used for those purposes
- To be borrowed or spent out

Gifts to your endowment fund have long lasting effects. While encouraging gifts left in a will or estate plan is a great way to grow your endowment fund, you can also

grow it through current gifts. In the following charts, you can see annual donations by parishioners of $25 affect the value of an endowment fund over a ten-year span.



In this chart, the assumptions are 1,500 households in the parish with a starting fund value of $25,000 (the minimum amount to begin receiving distributions) and an annual market growth of 6%. The light green line shows 25% of the families giving $25 a year to the endowment fund. The dark green line shows the growth if 50% of the families gave $25 a year. This chart assumes the parish does not take their annual distribution grants.



In this chart, the assumptions are 1,500 households in the parish with a starting fund value of $25,000 (the minimum amount to begin receiving distributions) and an annual market growth of 6%. The light green line shows 25% of the families giving $25 a year to the endowment fund. The dark green line shows the growth if 50% of the families gave $25 a year. This chart assumes the parish takes their annual distribution grant each year.

Appendix B: About the Catholic Foundation

Mission: The Catholic Foundation of North Georgia helps Catholics make a lasting difference in the community. We attract, professionally manage, and invest gifts to support the current and long-term financial needs of parishes, schools, charities, and other ministries.

Vision: Ensuring that the Catholic community and its ministries have the financial resources to serve and make a difference in the lives of current and future generations.

The Catholic Foundation of North Georgia is a charitable nonprofit governed by an independent board of lay leaders, clergy, and the archbishop. The Catholic Foundation is based in north Atlanta and serves the Archdiocese of Atlanta, which consists of the 69 counties in the northern half of Georgia. We are the planned giving partner of the Archdiocese of Atlanta.

The Catholic Foundation professionally invests and manages endowment funds, donor advised funds, and charitable gift annuities. We ensure that all funds are invested in accordance with the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops Socially Responsible Investment Guidelines. We also provide planned giving services, facilitate non-cash asset gifts for organizations, host #iGiveCatholic in the archdiocese, and more. Learn more about us at cfnga.org or give us a call at 404.497.9440.