



# WE ARE THE BODY OF CHRIST

Sharing our Gifts for the Church of Tomorrow

A Campaign to Support Parishes  
and Ministries in the Diocese of El Paso





## A LETTER FROM BISHOP SEITZ

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Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

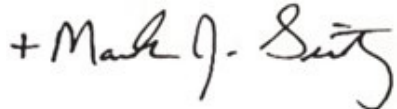
For 107 years, the Catholic Diocese of El Paso has served the proud people of El Paso, bringing service, prayer, and liturgy to the lives of many. Established by Pope Pius X on March 3, 1914, and throughout the years, the faith-filled traditions of our region and culture have shaped our dynamic Catholic community. Today, we remain a diverse, generous, and faithful Body of Christ, built on the commitment of our ancestors and the many proud people who call the Catholic Diocese of El Paso home.

As we look to 2022 and beyond, we choose to celebrate our past and look to the future. It is with great pride and conviction in our hearts that the Catholic Diocese of El Paso is continuing this Diocesan Capital Campaign - ***We Are the Body of Christ: Sharing Our Gifts for the Church of Tomorrow***. This important initiative will provide the necessary funds to support the men who are being educated and formed to become priests and deacons, strengthen our Catholic Schools and religious education programs, and nourish our communities and parishes.

I ask for you to reflect upon the many blessings and gifts you have received from God the Father's infinite mercy and generosity. We are called to be stewards of all we have been given, to use our gifts well, and to share what we have been given with others. By ensuring we can support our continuing and emerging needs, not only will we benefit from our partnership with one another, but also from the rich heritage of our ancestors; the faith-filled people who built our churches, parishes, and social programs that have enriched our lives.

Together, with Christ, there is no limit to the good we can and will achieve. I hope you will be inspired to join us as we ensure a bright future for the Catholic Diocese of El Paso. With my prayers and personal esteem, I remain,

Faithfully yours in Christ,



Most Reverend Mark J. Seitz, D.D.  
Bishop of El Paso



# WE ARE THE BODY OF CHRIST

## Campaign Overview



The Catholic Church has been present in west Texas for more than 300 years. Established in 1914, the Catholic Diocese of El Paso is a thriving and growing community of 56 parishes and 18 missions serving approximately 700,000 brothers and sisters in Christ. We also operate 8 grade schools and 3 high schools.

The Catholic Diocese of El Paso has seen many changes over the years, including this season of social-distancing. To ensure a strong future for our parishes, the Catholic Diocese of El Paso is continuing this diocesan-wide capital campaign – ***We Are the Body of Christ***. Through this initiative we hope to raise \$18 million to support priestly vocations and diaconate formation, provide financial assistance so more students can attend Catholic Schools, to invest in the education and training of our religious education teachers, and to strengthen our parishes. This is an ambitious goal, but one that is necessary if we are to carry out our mission to bring Christ to the world.

This campaign seeks to raise a minimum of \$18 million dollars over the next five years ensuring the Diocese can support:

**SEMINARIAN/DIACONATE  
EDUCATION & FORMATION**  
40%

**CATHOLIC EDUCATION &  
RELIGIOUS FORMATION**  
25%

**STRENGTHENING OUR  
PARISHES**  
20%

**PARISH EMERGENCY  
ASSISTANCE**  
15%



# SUPPORTING OUR SEMINARIANS AND DEACONS

Currently, 20 seminarians are discerning their vocation while preparing to serve as priests for the Catholic Diocese of El Paso. The priesthood is essential to our Catholic faith, and additional seminarians will be required in the coming years to meet the needs of our growing community. ***We Are the Body of Christ*** will direct funds to seminarians to encourage vocations, and to offset the cost of education and formation. Diaconate education and formation will also receive assistance.



Our seminarians are the future priests of the Diocese – priests who will help us grow our parishes, missions, and schools. Priests who will teach, provide the eucharist, hear confessions, baptize our children and grandchildren, and anoint us in our time of need. This will become a great opportunity to ensure that the Catholic Diocese of El Paso can continue to support our future priests.

**It costs about \$35,000-\$40,000 per year to education one seminarian, and most men study for 6-7 years.**

 = **\$1 Million**  
Each year on seminary education

**20 Men Currently in Formation**

Further, we are all aware of the shortage of priests. Many priests in our Diocese are responsible for two or more parishes. One priest in our Diocese oversees 5 parishes. With fewer priests we must rely on our Deacons to help us meet the spiritual needs of our communities.

**WE WILL DEVOTE \$8 MILLION TO SEMINARY EDUCATION AND DIACONATE FORMATION.**

# CATHOLIC EDUCATION & RELIGIOUS FORMATION

Providing a full spectrum of formation opportunities, from childhood through young adulthood, will ensure we are preparing, cultivating and raising the next generation of disciples and leaders for our church.

## CATHOLIC SCHOOLS

Our Catholic schools teach the faith to over 2,300 children and youth. Ensuring that no student is ever turned away due to their family's inability to pay tuition is a top priority for the Catholic Diocese of El Paso. Funds will be directed for grants and scholarships, make upgrades, and purchase technology or other materials.

## FAITH FORMATION

Children and young adults across the Diocese are enrolled in parish religious education programs, and this number will continue to grow as the Catholic population does. Campaign funds will help parishes find new and creative approaches to faith formation, and acquire the resources needed to upgrade and enhance their religious education programs. Additionally, resources will be provided to invest in training and certification of volunteers to ensure that they are qualified to take on this task of passing on the faith.

**WE WILL DEVOTE \$5 MILLION TO EMBRACE CATHOLIC EDUCATION AND RELIGIOUS FORMATION.**



# FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE FOR OUR PARISHES

Our parishes and missions are the heart of our Diocese. It is where Catholics celebrate the sacraments, learn about and grow in faith, pass on and model their beliefs, and come together to serve their community.



## EXPANDING PARISHES

Population growth has stretched some parishes in this area beyond their ministerial and physical capacities. Knowing this is a reality we will continue to face for years to come, the ***We are the Body of Christ*** campaign will support the expansion of these parishes to accommodate new membership and ministries.

## RURAL PARISHES

Crucial to our Catholic communities are our many parishes and missions in rural west Texas. Many are very small and may be the only parish for miles within their county. For these parishes, emergency costs may be too great to bear on their own. While these parishes may not have experienced the same growth, they must remain open. Through the generosity of our parishioners in this campaign, the Diocese will be able to provide operational and emergency support for rural parishes.

## LOCAL PARISH NEEDS

Our local parishes have specific and unique needs also. By sharing diocesan funds with the parishes, we can achieve both the goals of the Diocese and the distinctive needs of the parishes – strengthening and bringing together our Diocese as a whole.

**WE WILL DEDICATE \$3 MILLION TO HELP PARISHES IN THESE SITUATIONS.**



## WAYS TO GIVE

**We Are the Body of Christ** is an historic initiative for the people and parishes in the Diocese of El Paso, which will fund extraordinary projects and programs. Large or small, each sacrificial donation makes a real difference for our local Church. Below, you can learn about the various ways in which you can make a donation over the next five years.

### ELECTRONIC FUNDS TRANSFER

Decide to give through an automatic bank withdraw, credit card, or debt card. This is the easiest and most cost effective way to give.

### CASH, CHECKS, & MONEY ORDERS

Receive periodic reminders with a self-addressed envelope in which you can place your donation.

### STOCK, MUTUAL FUNDS, & SECURITIES

Gifted stock, mutual funds, and securities are sold promptly upon reception.

### IRA DISTRIBUTION

Those over 70 1/2 or older with required minimum withdrawals can decide to donate their distribution to the **We Are the Body of Christ Campaign** and not have to pay income tax for said donation.

**The point is this: whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and whoever sows bountifully will also reap bountifully. Each one must give as he has decided in his heart, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver**  
**- 2 Corinthians 9:6-7**



## CAMPAIGN PRAYER

O Lord our God, who revealed Your love for us through the total self-giving of Jesus, Your Son, and have made us sharers in that saving work through our Communion in His Body and Blood; grant that we might also reveal Christ's presence through our participation in the Capital Campaign of the Catholic Diocese of El Paso.

Through Your love, we truly are the Body of Christ. By sharing our gifts for the Church of tomorrow, allow us to lay down a legacy of Faith, making possible the preparation of men to serve you as priests, forming a generation of children who will come to know You better each day through their Catholic education, and building up parishes that will provide fitting homes for the work of the Church in the years to come.

Through the intercession of Our Lady of Guadalupe, move the hearts of those of great means and those with limited means that all may make a generous sacrifice in your name. Alone we can do nothing. But You can make fruitful our humble efforts so that together we can reveal your presence in this our border region so blest by Your goodness.

Through Christ, our Lord. Amen.

