

Chapter 11 Reorganization/Giving Frequently Asked Questions

These questions and answers below are to be used by the pastor/all Monsignors and priests to help them answer questions related to giving and the Chapter 11 Reorganization process. These are generally designed as talking/message points for you to use when explaining these different aspects to your staff and/or parishioners. Some of these points could be added to parish announcements/messaging as needed.

Does a portion of the offertory funds I contribute to the parish go to the Archdiocese?

The vast majority of the money you offer to your parish is used to support the day-to-day operations of your parish. Every parish is unique but in general, nearly 90 cents of every dollar is used by the parish and allows your parish and its ministries to operate.

The small percentage that remains goes to the Archdiocese and helps to fund the support they give to parishes, schools and many ministries that serve the wider community. This percentage is referred to as "cathedraticum." This cathedraticum contributes to the funding of ministries and operations at the Archdiocese.

Please know, when parishioners choose to withhold their support from the offertory in an attempt to reduce funds directed to the Archdiocese, the consequence is primarily felt within our own community. This affects our ability to sustain our own operations and ministries.

What does offertory support?

Many of you are likely aware that the offertory plays a crucial role in sustaining our parish financially. Your generous contributions not only ensure the smooth operation of the parish and supports our mission, essential ministries, and our outreach to the larger community. Offertory support is used for salary and benefits for staff members, utilities, maintenance of parish facilities, and ministry programming, as well as insurance premiums for insurance through the Archdiocesan insurance programs. These insurance programs provide coverage for claims relating to property damage, healthcare, and other liabilities including misconduct.

As Catholics, we extend our support to those in need, providing food, shelter, and care for the elderly, and spreading the message of faith to those who seek it. While you may not always witness these actions directly, your offertory support has a profound impact on countless lives, both locally within our parish and beyond.

A small portion of the offertory is allocated to the needs of the Archdiocese, which is crucial for the smooth functioning of our parish and all others within the Archdiocese. These funds support various services and professionals who assist us in numerous ways. This includes the formation and education of our priests and deacons, project managers who help assess our facilities and devise long-term strategic plans, aid with fundraising and campaign planning, legal guidance, human resources support, as well as fiscal and accounting services.

In conclusion, offertory contributions are essential to the well-being and forward momentum of the Church. They strengthen and support the overarching mission of the Archdiocese and ensure the vibrancy and sustainability of the local parish community. Each act of giving, whether large or small, weaves a tapestry of generosity that benefits the entire Body of Christ.

What is the importance of cathedraticum?

The word "cathedraticum" may not be immediately familiar to many parishioners, but its implications are far-reaching and integral to the functioning and well-being of the larger Church community. At its core, cathedraticum is a financial contribution made by individual parishes to their respective diocese or archdiocese. This reflects the connection and responsibility of individual parishes to support the broader works and missions of the Church.

The Archdiocese asks parishes to pay as cathedraticum about 12% of their contributions to Central Services of the Archdiocese for its operations. Like parish operations, Central Services operations include salary and benefits for its 170 employees, as well as utilities, maintenance of facilities, and mission-based programming. The service supplied by Central Services provides an essential and substantial benefit to our parishes and schools.

Benefits of cathedraticum for Ministry:

1. **Support for Centralized Functions:** Just as a parish requires funding for its operations and activities, so does the diocese or archdiocese. These central ecclesiastical structures oversee vast pastoral, educational, and administrative duties that support many parishes in the region.
2. **Resource Allocation:** Cathedraticum helps to ensure that all parishes, including less affluent parishes and their ministries, can thrive.
3. **Support for Broader Initiatives:** Dioceses often take on projects and missions that are beyond the scope of individual parishes, such as large-scale evangelization efforts, interfaith dialogues, or diocesan-wide youth programs. Cathedraticum helps fund these broader initiatives.

Why should I give to offertory?

The offertory collection during Mass plays a pivotal role in the life of a parish. It serves as a tangible reflection of the parishioners' gratitude, sacrifice, and commitment to their faith community. Here are some reasons why this act of giving is essential:

1. **Support for Local Parish Operations:** Utilities, maintenance, staff salaries, and other daily operational costs of a parish are often funded by the offertory.
2. **Sustaining Ministries:** Many parishes run various ministries, from catechesis and youth groups to outreach programs for the needy. These initiatives rely heavily on the generous contributions of the faithful.
3. **Act of Worship and Gratitude:** Beyond its pragmatic purposes, the act of giving to the offertory is a form of worship. It signifies a parishioner's acknowledgment of God's providence and a desire to give back from the blessings they've received.

What parish resources will be used in connection with the Archdiocese's Chapter 11 reorganization?

The primary, direct financial impact to parishes from the Archdiocese's reorganization filing will be twofold: **First**, parishes will need legal representation apart from that of the Archdiocese. **Second**, parishes will be asked to make a contribution toward the reorganization settlement trust. At this point, it is impossible to know the exact amounts that parishes will need to pay for these two aspects of their participation. Pastors are encouraged to examine parish savings as a potential source for these costs. Every effort will be made to preserve offertory contributions for parish operations.

Regarding Archdiocesan contributions to the reorganization trust, in years when Central Services had an operating surplus, the Archdiocese placed those funds into long-term investments. Those investments – not Central Services operating funds – will be the primary source of funding for the Archdiocese's reorganization expenses and portion of the settlement trust resulting from the Chapter 11 proceedings. Note that in other diocesan bankruptcies, the bulk of the funding for the trusts has come from insurance carriers. As mentioned above, parishes will be asked to contribute towards the trust, albeit to a far lesser extent. For that contribution, parishes would be protected from future lawsuits related to historic child sexual abuse.