

Guidelines for Requesting Funds

OBJECTIVE:

Catholic Extension Society uniquely contributes to the growth and vibrancy of the church in the U.S. by strategically investing in under-resourced Catholic communities to unleash the power of faith that transforms hearts, lives and society. This national fundraising organization provides financial resources to dioceses and parishes through programs and services investing in people, infrastructure and ministries.

INTRODUCTION:

Catholic Extension Society provides funding directly to under-resourced “Extension dioceses” that are pre-approved by Catholic Extension Society’s Board of Governors. Funding is not available to individuals or organizations that do not work in these specified dioceses.

For a list of approved Extension dioceses, [please click here](#)

If your diocese is an approved “Extension diocese” and you would like to make a request for funding, please notify your designated diocesan contact person. It is important to discuss your funding needs before making a formal funding request.

To find your diocesan representative for a Catholic Extension Society funding request or for general questions regarding funding eligibility, funding opportunities, or procedures, please consult our [Frequently Asked Questions and Policies](#).

Or, contact Catholic Extension Society directly at mission@catholicextension.org.

TYPES OF FUNDING:

There are six basic ways in which Catholic Extension Society provides support to Catholic communities:

- [Building Foundation](#) Funds the operation of ministries that extend a basic church presence to the most under-resourced communities.
- [Building Leaders](#) Funds the education/training of lay and ordained leaders.
- [Building Churches and other Facilities](#) Funds the construction and renovation of churches and other critical church facilities.
- [Engaging Young Catholics](#) Supports ministries that provide faith formation for children, teens, and young adults and families.
- [Building Capacity](#) Funds initiatives that help the church increase its fundraising capabilities, manage its financial resources, and operate more efficiently. Includes support for Catholic Schools.

- [Enhancing Pastoral and Social Ministry](#) Funds a variety of pastoral and social outreach efforts of the church.

FUNDING REQUEST DEADLINES:

- May 1, 2024
- November 1, 2024

To Make a New Request or Access Saved Requests or Reporting Form, please visit our website at www.catholicextension.org

ADDITIONAL OPPORTUNITIES THROUGH STRATEGIC INITIATIVES

In addition to the funding opportunities described above, Catholic Extension Society works with partner organizations to proactively create additional opportunities to support Catholic communities in “Extension dioceses.” Partners are typically Catholic organizations offering services and resources to dioceses that the dioceses would otherwise be unable to attain due to the barriers of cost and/or geographic distance. Partnerships provide support to dioceses in a variety of ways but are especially represented in Catholic Extension Society’s “Building Leaders” initiative. Examples of partnerships include universities that heavily reduce tuition for degree programs for lay and ordained Catholic leaders. For more information about the current availability and nature of these strategic initiative opportunities, [please click here](#).

For New Requests

Please click on the appropriate link below to complete a **NEW** online request.

- [Building Foundation](#) Funds the operation of ministries that extend a basic church presence to the most under-resourced communities.
- [Building Leaders](#) Funds the education/training of lay and ordained leaders.
- [Building Churches and other Facilities](#) Funds the construction and renovation of churches and other critical church facilities.
- [Engaging Young Catholics](#) Supports ministries that provide faith formation for children, teens, and young adults and families.
- [Building Capacity](#) Funds initiatives that help the church increase its fundraising capabilities, manage its financial resources, and operate more efficiently. Includes support for Catholic Schools.
- [Enhancing Pastoral and Social Ministry](#) Funds a variety of pastoral and social outreach efforts of the church.

For Saved Requests or Reporting Forms

To log in to your account, please [click here](#).

Category One: Building Foundation

GOAL

To help maintain and extend the Church's basic pastoral presence and administrative functions in the most under-resourced communities, through salary support and small operations funding.

SUMMARY

This funding initiative supports activities crucial to sustaining or expanding a Catholic presence in a diocese, ensuring that all Catholics have the opportunity to experience the faith. This type of funding is available only to support fundamental administrative and pastoral services through small operations funding and salary subsidies of ordained, religious, and lay ministers who extend the Catholic faith in their diocese's most under-resourced areas. Financially stable parishes or ministries, even if located in a "Extension diocese" are not appropriate recipients of this type of support. Funding in this category is provided to the communities with the greatest financial need, where the basic operation of fundamental services and institutions would be nonexistent or severely limited without external funding. Recipients of this form of funding are nonetheless asked to demonstrate the progress of their ministry and justify their ongoing financial need for such support on an annual basis.

QUALIFYING FUNDING AREAS

Basic Needs for Parishes or Ministries

Catholic Extension Society will consider funding the following basic operational and staffing needs:

- Salary subsidies for core pastoral staff, lay and ordained [click here for more information on Hispanic Lay leadership initiative](#)
- Salary subsidies for core administrative staff at a mission parish or diocese, such as business managers.
- Essential operations expenses, including heating expenses and minister travel.
- Other basic resources for ministry or administration in a diocese.

DOCUMENT REQUIREMENTS

- [Online Funding Request Form](#)
- Letter of endorsement from diocesan bishop (one letter is sufficient for simultaneously submitted applications, but a copy of that letter should be attached to each application)
- Financial statements from program, department, parish or ministry seeking support.
- Program budget for the year in which you seek funding.

Category Two: Building Leaders

GOAL

To assist dioceses with the recruitment, education, and ongoing formation of current and future leaders in the Church.

SUMMARY

A critical need for the Church is the availability of trained, competent, and faithful ministers. “Building Leaders” supports efforts to develop well-trained diocesan and parish leaders in sufficient numbers to sustain excellence in church life. Funding through this initiative supports the recruitment, education, ongoing formation, and professional development of ordained and lay leaders. Additionally, Catholic Extension Society has developed a number of existing partnerships with external organizations and universities that offer opportunities for training and leadership development, offered over and above the diocese’s particular funding requests. Please [click here to learn more about these opportunities](#)

QUALIFYING FUNDING AREAS

Recruitment and Training of New Leaders

Catholic Extension Society will consider funding the following recruitment and training opportunities for new leaders in Extension dioceses:

- **For the education of seminarians:**
 - For Seminarians, Catholic Extension Society offers resources in two basic ways.
 - **Subsidies** that fund a portion of a diocese’s overall financial obligation for seminarian tuition, room and board, and the operations of seminary & vocations recruitment programs located in their diocese. The amount of funding will be determined by the number of seminarians sponsored by the diocese for the year in which funds are requested.
 - **Challenge Funding** is available on a limited basis to enable dioceses to build endowments for seminarian education so that they can better manage seminarian expense fluctuations from year to year. Dioceses that receive seminarian subsidies as described in bullet point #1 can also seek challenge funding. Dioceses will be required to raise a minimum amount, dependent upon the total challenge amount, within a specific time period, typically one year, in order to receive the challenge funding. This funding must be directed to a separately established restricted fund.

[Click here to read more about the specific terms of this opportunity](#)

- **For the education of deacons:**
 - Subsidies that help dioceses funding their diaconate cohorts preparing for ministry.
 - Funding for the professional development of deacons, including regional and national conferences.
 - Funding to support diocesan recruitment efforts for the diaconate.

- **For lay or religious leaders:**
 - Funding for lay pastoral education for those preparing for full-time ministry, including Masters-level degree programs.
 - Support for on-line education and remote learning opportunities.
 - Funding for national or regional training workshops
 - Funding for non-degree certification of lay leaders
 - Funding to support diocesan recruitment efforts for lay leaders.

Ongoing Formation

Catholic Extension Society will consider funding the following opportunities for **priests and deacons** as well as **lay and religious leaders** in Extension dioceses:

- “New skills” training if the acquisition of that new skill is of strategic interest to the diocese or parish, where the minister serves. (i.e. language or administrative skills)
- Opportunities for pastoral leaders to convene and engage in ongoing education.

DOCUMENT REQUIREMENTS

- [Online Funding Request Form for funding Lay Leaders: Seminarian Education](#)
- [Online Funding Request form for funding Lay Leaders: Other Lay Leaders](#)
- Letter of endorsement from diocesan bishop (one letter is sufficient for simultaneously submitted requests, but a copy of that letter should be attached to each online request)
- Financial statements from diocesan program/office, or entity seeking support.
- Program budget for year in which you seek funding.
- List of students and their basic information: names, emails, age, their associated parish/ministry in the diocese, year of ordination/program completion.
- Verification of expenses, such as tuition and room and board, or verification of conference fees and information on the nature of the conference.

Category Three: Building Churches and other Facilities.

GOAL

To meet the facility needs of evolving or growing Catholic communities through construction, expansion, or renovation of critical facilities.

SUMMARY

Catholic Extension Society funds the construction, expansion, or renovation of churches and facilities that enable the dynamic practice of faith and promote the experience of church community. In this category, Catholic Extension Society will consider the facility needs of a diocese, to help ensure that spaces are adequately sized, safe, and that they meet the needs of the local populations. Catholic Extension Society will favor those projects where the communities have urgent facility needs, a convincing funding strategy and business plan, demonstrated strong local support for the proposed project, and evidence of their limited means to raise all of the funds themselves. Catholic Extension Society only supports active building and renovation projects and does not give funds to service debt on projects where work has been completed. Therefore, the ideal point at which Catholic Extension Society should be engaged for this funding is when a parish/organization is still actively raising funds and the project is within one year or less from starting.

QUALIFYING FUNDING AREAS

Catholic Extension Society will consider funding minor and major facility requests only for the following types of facilities:

- *Churches* – places where liturgy is regularly celebrated.
- *Community space* – places where community can convene outside of liturgy (i.e. parish halls and parish community centers).
- *Program space* – facilities where services and religious education are provided.
- *Residential facilities for ministers* – in extremely under-resourced communities, modest housing will be provided if the local community lacks the means to provide it.
- *Temporary structure* – for communities in transition due to population changes, recent disasters, etc.

Minor Requests

Catholic Extension Society will consider funding up to 100% of the following minor projects *only* for the most under-resourced applicants:

- *Repairs* – periodic improvements that are urgently needed to keep an essential church facility usable or energy efficient.
- *Equipment/Small Furnishing needs* – audio equipment, chairs, other basic furnishings etc.

Major Requests

Catholic Extension Society will consider funding a portion of a major project's total budget, the amount of which is handled on a case-by-case basis. Funding amounts generally range up to a maximum of \$100,000. Projects that will be considered include the following major projects for all applicants in Extension dioceses:

- *Renovation* – major enhancement or restoration of existing space, needed as a result of the passage of time, weather-related facility needs, new safety-code requirements, or a natural disaster.
- *Expansion* – enlargement of space, necessitated by community growth.
- *New Construction* – a new building where community needs justify its construction.

Major funding requests will be offered in the form of a matching challenge. After presentation and approval of the request, funding strategy and church business plan, Catholic Extension Society will pledge a specific amount and lay out the matching challenge benchmarks and conditions. The matching challenge duration, funding amount and aggressiveness will be handled on a case-by-case basis. Such factors will be considered: parish financial capacity, fundraising to date, and the actual building project timeline. The qualifying matching dollars must be raised after the matching challenge approval date. Any fundraising and pledges made prior to the matching challenge funding approval date will not count toward the matching challenge. However, these savings and funds will be noted as a demonstration of the project's momentum and feasibility. If the intended recipient fails to raise matching dollars in the agreed upon period of time, the matching offer will be rescinded.

Special Guidelines for Church Buildings Damaged in Federally Declared Disaster Events

Often, church properties throughout the country are impacted by natural disasters such as wildfires, floods, tornadoes, and hurricanes. Catholic Extension Society's policy is to provide rebuilding funds only to communities where no other funding is available to them in their recovery process. The United States government has recently changed its policy and will now allow FEMA public assistance to be used to rebuild and repair "houses of worship" in federally declared disaster zones. Please carefully read Catholic Extension Society's revised guidelines. Catholic Extension Society will consider funding requests to rebuild and repair impacted properties in federally declared disaster zones, only if the diocese has completed two important steps:

1. Completed their insurance claim - demonstrating any portion of their claim that is unfunded by their insurance provider.
2. Completed their FEMA Public Assistance Application – demonstrating any portion of their claim that will not be covered by FEMA.

After these two steps have been completed, Catholic Extension Society will consider a diocese's requests for its damaged properties.

DOCUMENT REQUIREMENTS*

- [Online funding request form](#)
- Letter of endorsement from the diocesan bishop (one letter is sufficient for simultaneously submitted requests, but a copy of that letter should be attached to each request)
- Financial statements of the parish/community sponsoring the project
- Project Budget - Delineation of repair or equipment cost estimates and relevant documentation to support such estimates, and other sources of revenue.
- Drawings or sketches of current structure and/or proposed end product (if applicable)
- Funding plan and any relevant documentation on fundraising activity to date (if applicable)
- Breakdown of Insurance coverage and anticipated FEMA funds, if building was destroyed or damaged in a federally declared disaster. (if applicable)
- Any relevant documentation on fundraising activity to date, if applicable

* Please explain fully in writing if any document is either unobtainable or would be excessively burdensome to procure.

Category Four: Engaging Young Catholics

GOAL

To support ministries to children, teens, and young adults, and families that provide faith formation.

SUMMARY

The vibrancy and viability of a Catholic community largely depends on its ability to share the faith with the next generation. “Engaging Young Catholics” helps dioceses and parishes provide for the pastoral and faith formation needs of young Catholics. Additionally, Catholic Extension Society supports initiatives that serve to develop new leaders in the Church among young Catholics.

QUALIFYING FUNDING AREAS

Catholic Extension Society will consider funding the following types of activities and programs through operational support, salary subsidies or seed money that sustains, expands, or creates ministries that serve young Catholics on a parish, regional, or diocesan level.

- College/University campus ministry
- Ministries to teenagers
- Religious education of children and families.
- Young Adult ministries/programs

DOCUMENT REQUIREMENTS

- [Online Funding Request Form](#)
- Letter of endorsement from diocesan bishop (one letter is sufficient for simultaneously submitted applications, but a copy of that letter should be attached to each application)
- Financial statements of program, department, or entity seeking funding
- Budget for year of the funding with full breakdown of project expenses & revenue
- List of qualifications of minister seeking funding, if applicable
- Product information or program brochure describing scope of services, if applicable

Category Five: Building Capacity

GOAL

Enable dioceses to take steps toward supporting themselves by growing their financial and operational capacity.

SUMMARY

“Building Capacity” funds initiatives that help dioceses operate more efficiently, increase financial stability and fundraising capacity, promote effective fiscal management and transparency, as well as institutionally strengthen Catholic Schools. While all funding categories help a diocese build its capacity in some way, this particular category is designed to directly help dioceses fund specific initiatives that will enable them take steps toward becoming a more self-sustaining community.

QUALIFYING FUNDING AREAS

Catholic Extension Society will consider support through “Building Capacity” funds for the following programs and activities:

Fundraising and Development Initiatives

To help dioceses raise funds themselves through:

- Salary subsidies for fundraising and grant-writing professionals, giving them a specific timeframe in which to begin generating their own salary.
- Support for the professional development training of fundraising and church stewardship professionals through conferences and certification courses.
- Subsidies for the costs of implementing fundraising software or technology.

Efficiency Initiatives

To support investments that will result in operational efficiency over time, such as:

- Funding **operational assessments/studies** to ensure the diocese is using resources as efficiently as possible and to identify ways to reduce overhead. Examples of such assessments include the following:
 - Energy efficiency study,
 - Operational efficiency assessment,
 - New staffing solutions, and
 - Potential cross-diocesan partnerships that would leverage economies of scale.
- Funding to support **strategic or pastoral planning** in an Extension Diocese.
- Funding to support **technology** that results in cost-effective, long-distance conferencing or improved operations.

Fiscal Management Support

Catholic Extension Society funds the following opportunities:

- *The Mission Diocese Fund, LLC* – a pooled investment opportunity with other Catholic dioceses & Catholic Foundations which offers the following benefits:
 - Access to Exclusive Fund Managers
 - Lower Fees (underwritten by Catholic Extension Society, as a contribution)
 - Socially Responsible Investment Screening
 - Administrative support, for your accounting & sub accounting needs.(for more information about the Mission Diocese Fund, LLC, [click here](#))
- Funds for financial audits, or other internal financial controls/support systems if not currently in place at the diocese.
- Opportunities for professional development of fiscal managers, such as conference attendance
- Support for Catholic Schools, which includes: **
 - Capacity-building programs to ensure sustainability and excellence in school management.
 - Support for feasibility research when exploring the establishment of new Catholic schools.

**Catholic Extension Society is not currently accepting unique funding requests for schools. Funding is only able to be considered through our targeted Strategic Initiatives when offered by Catholic Extension Society.

Catholic Extension Society does not offer support for the building, maintenance, or operating expenses of new or existing Catholic Schools and does not offer tuition assistance to Catholic school students.

DOCUMENT REQUIREMENTS FOR BUILDING CAPACITY REQUESTS

- [Online Funding Request Form](#)
- Letter of endorsement from diocesan bishop (one letter is sufficient for simultaneously submitted applications, but a copy of that letter should be attached to each application)
- Financial statements from program, department, parish or ministry seeking funding.
- Literature on the technology, project, program, research initiative or conference, including cost estimate breakdown.
- Project budget for the funding year, and breakdown of expenses & other sources of revenue, if applicable
- Project budget for future years, with breakdown of expenses & other sources of revenue, if applicable.
- Resume or qualifications of employee/individual (i.e. seeking temporary salary subsidy for fundraising or development initiatives), if applicable.

-
- A plan for how the investment by Catholic Extension Society will help the funding recipient build its capacity and advance stewardship

Category Six: Enhancing Pastoral and Social Ministry

GOAL

To enable the Church to reach more people and promote the transformation of lives, hearts and society through various pastoral and social ministries.

SUMMARY

Catholic Extension Society supports the Church's pastoral and social outreach ministries. Whereas "Building Foundation," is intended to support the operation of the Church's basic pastoral and administrative presence in a diocese, the "Enhancing Pastoral and Social Ministry" program is intended to support some of the more specific and strategic elements of the Church's ministerial efforts.

QUALIFYING FUNDING AREAS

Catholic Extension Society will consider funding initiatives, which help establish, expand or enrich pastoral and social ministries, including:

- Support for the purchase and maintenance of catechetical resources, including Bibles.
- Support for ministries which strengthen family life and marriage.
- Support for effective media programs via radio or television which demonstrate great potential as a tool for evangelization/outreach.
- Programmatic funding to promote or improve the sacramental practice or liturgical experience of Catholics.
- Funding to create or extend Catholic ministries that have a social outreach dimension, such as ministries to the homeless, immigrants, or incarcerated.
Note: this does not include subsidizing operations of Catholic Charities or Diocesan Social Services or funding the operations of Catholic hospitals.
- Support after disasters - While Catholic Extension Society does not serve as a first responder, it can provide small support to help Catholic communities restore disrupted ecclesial serves and continue to practice the faith in the wake of disasters. See "Building Churches" for all facility needs in the aftermath of disasters.

DOCUMENT REQUIREMENTS

- [Online request form](#).
- Letter of endorsement from diocesan bishop (one letter is sufficient for simultaneously submitted requests, but a copy of that letter should be attached to each request)
- Financial statements of program, department, or entity seeking funding
- Budget for the funding year with full breakdown of project expenses & revenue.
- Product or program information, (i.e. brochure), if applicable.