

Annual Catholic Appeal Sample Guest Speaker Talk #1

It was a windy and cold February evening. My colleagues and I were preparing for a training session with parish volunteers hosted at Sts. Joachim and Ann Care Service and Housing Center in St. Charles, Missouri. We made several trips to the building unloading materials. A woman with a teenage girl met us at the door each and every time, holding it open with a smile and a friendly “Hello, let me get the door for you.” (We later found out that the woman and the teenage girl were mother and daughter.)

As we were setting up for the meeting, I noticed that the mother and daughter were meeting at a side table with one of the representatives from the Care Center. They were crying and the representative was consoling them and resting a hand on the mother’s shoulder.

After the mother and daughter left, we asked the Care Center rep if everything was alright. She smiled pleasantly and said, “We were able to help them.” She informed us that the mother and daughter were homeless. The father had left and took everything; the car, food, clothes, everything. They were homeless, hungry, afraid, and abandoned.

Imagine how we felt when we learned of their situation. This kind mother and her daughter were so gracious to help us by opening the doors for **us** to enter into the facility that evening, while we were training volunteers to raise funds to open doors for the **many** who come to the Church for help. It was such a powerful moment for us.

The mother and daughter received help that evening, a warm place to stay, along with food and clothing. The Care Center would also be providing assistance to the mother in finding work and the daughter would be able to stay in school. They received more than just material help, though. They received the gift of Hope from a ministry of the Church. The help they received came from you, through the Annual Catholic Appeal.

The Catholic Church does not exist just for Catholics. We are here, this morning, as Messengers of Hope for the entire world, and especially for those in our own communities. We are called to serve all, and to help them to know the Love and Mercy of Jesus Christ.

Whether it is helping an abandoned child find a place to sleep, seeing that a family receives financial support to educate their children, or making sure an elderly person is receives care, the Church never stops loving and supporting people in their need.

What if Sts. Joachim and Ann Care Services did not exist? Or their doors were closed? I do not want to think of what might have happened to the mother and daughter I met. Thank goodness their doors were open so this mother and daughter, so close to despair, could experience the gift of hope.

Because of the gifts God has entrusted to you, by your generosity, you can influence the lives of so many. I am here to ask you to make a pledge to support the Annual Catholic Appeal. I am here to ask to ask you to give the gift of hope to someone you may not even know or may not be able to thank you in person.

Everyone’s gift is important to the mission of the Church regardless of the amount you are able to give. Please make your pledge today.

Pledge cards are available after Mass just outside those doors and to the left. (Volunteer name) from the parish will be there to assist you, because they believe in the mission of the Appeal as well. Because this is such an important effort, there may be a short line of people waiting to make their pledge, but it will be worth your while to wait just a minute or two for your turn to support the Appeal. You can make pledges in other ways as well. (Explain online giving, scan to give, text to give, etc.)

I will also be available to answer any questions that you might have. Thank you for your time this morning. Thank you, (Pastor Name) for inviting me to come today. Thank you to all of you for your support of the Annual Catholic Appeal. I will be praying for you and your parish families.