



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

PARISH FINANCIAL HEALTH

1. STEWARDING GOD'S FINANCIAL GIFTS

Parish financial resources support the mission of the Church through:

- Worship and sacramental life
- Faith formation and education
- Youth and young adult ministries
- Evangelism and outreach
- Philanthropy and care for those in need
- Parish operations and administration

KEY PRINCIPLE

Parish finances should always be viewed as the stewardship of God's gifts—not simply the management of a business.

2. FINANCIAL TRANSPARENCY BUILDS TRUST

Healthy parishes foster confidence through:

- Open and honest financial communication
- Clear explanations of major decisions
- Consistent reporting to clergy, Parish Council, and parishioners
- A culture where questions are welcomed and addressed respectfully

Best Practices

- Present monthly financial reports to the Parish Council
- Compare actual performance against budget
- Share appropriate financial updates with parishioners regularly

3. BUDGETING FOR MISSION AND MINISTRY

An effective parish budget should:

- Align resources with ministry priorities
- Include input from ministry leaders
- Be developed collaboratively and thoughtfully
- Reflect realistic income and expense assumptions

Budget Priorities

- Worship and liturgical life
- Education and faith formation
- Youth and young adult ministries
- Staffing and administration
- Repair and maintenance reserves
- Cash reserves for future needs

4. PLANNING FOR THE FUTURE

Repair & Maintenance Reserves

- Address facility needs proactively
- Avoid costly deferred maintenance
- Preserve parish assets and campus quality

Cash reserves

Provide stability by:

- Covering seasonal stewardship fluctuations
- Managing unexpected expenses
- Supporting ministry continuity during challenging periods

Stewardship giving options

Parishes should make giving convenient through:

- Online giving platforms
- Credit card processing
- Stock and securities donations
- Planned giving and estate gifts

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5. COMPLIANCE & FINANCIAL CONTROLS

Strong financial controls protect parish resources and reputation.

KEY SAFEGUARDS

- Annual audits or financial reviews
- Compliance with Uniform Parish Regulations (UPR)
- Fraud prevention policies
- Cybersecurity awareness and training
- Positive Pay and ACH fraud protection
- Multiple banking relationships when appropriate

Leadership Responsibility

Transparency, accountability, and proper oversight are essential components of faithful stewardship.

6. TREASURER DEVELOPMENT & SUCCESSION

Financial leadership should be intentionally cultivated.

Recommendations

- Identify future financial leaders early
- Develop assistant treasurer roles
- Provide training and mentoring opportunities
- Establish succession plans before leadership transitions occur

Key Insight

A parish's financial health depends not only on sound systems, but also on capable and trusted leaders.

7. LEADERSHIP TAKEAWAYS

Healthy parish finances require:

- Faithful stewardship
- Financial transparency
- Responsible budgeting
- Strong reserves and planning
- Effective controls and compliance
- Leadership development and succession planning

BOTTOM LINE

Financial health enables a parish to fulfill its mission with confidence, integrity, and sustainability—ensuring that God's gifts are managed wisely for the benefit of current and future generations.



HAVE A QUESTION?

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LEADERSHIP
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