



**Knights of  
Columbus**  
Charitable Fund®

# **Creating a Legacy: A Generosity Planning Guide**



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# INTRODUCTION

*“Each must do as already determined, without sadness or compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver.”* St. Paul wrote these words to the Christian community in Corinth. Since the beginning of our faith, generosity has been a central precept of Christianity. Even before Jesus’s resurrection, the Old Testament repeatedly teaches us about the importance of giving.

Faithful generosity is a great way for individuals and families to demonstrate to future generations the impact that charitable giving has on the world around them. We encourage you to involve your entire family in your giving of time, talents and treasures. Knights of Columbus Charitable Fund (KCCF) can be the cornerstone of your family’s generosity.

This Generosity Planning Guide will help your family have conversations about shared goals, interests and values, as well as how you can all be more involved in giving. **This useful guide provides a hands-on approach within each section that allows individual members of your family to share their own experiences and goals, as well as family exercises for everyone to compare notes and create a common generosity plan.**

You can work through this guide at a pace that works for your family. If your family includes older children, you may be able to complete these exercises at one time. For families with younger children, it may work better to break these exercises and discussions up into several phases. Whatever you decide, everyone should have a voice in your family’s generosity planning. And you may need to update your family’s generosity plan as children get older or family dynamics change.



# CREATING YOUR GENEROSITY PLAN

## ► STEP ONE – Identifying Your Values

KCCF provides an opportunity to align your generosity with your faith through our Charitable Fund. But to create the most impact, you should be thoughtful about what you hope to accomplish and how you plan to get there. The backbone of any effective plan is to identify your values. Our values guide our actions and help us determine what is important to us.

**For families with younger children, these questions might help:** What is your favorite way of helping others? How do you feel when you help others? What could you do as a family to help others?

### Individual Family Member Exercise

What are four words your family would use to describe your values?

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How do these words impact or reflect your current day-to-day life?

Think about something impactful or transformative in your life. How did this experience shape your values?

### Family Exercise

As a family, review and discuss each individual family members' values and goals. Are there any that are similar or any impactful experiences throughout the family that could guide your generosity? Identify your family's top four shared values below.

## ► STEP TWO – Define Your Area(s) of Impact

Now that you've identified the values that are most important to you and your family, it's time to think about how these values are embodied by the causes that you care about. As Catholics, we're called to evangelize in everything we do. That means being intentional about the causes we support. At KCCF, we take this calling very seriously, and take personal pride in helping you support causes that protect human life, promote human dignity and align with your values through our Catholic investment and granting due diligence screening process.



### Individual Family Member Exercise

Give each family member a sheet of paper and allow everyone 15 minutes to complete this exercise. Think about the areas of impact that are important to you as an individual. To help guide you, here are some common charitable causes KCCF donors support. You might have additional causes that you care about.

Pro-life Work    Education    Sheltering the Homeless    Parish Support    Feeding the Hungry  
Human/Civil Rights    Healthcare    Children    The Environment

### Family Exercise

As a family, discuss any common areas of impact from the above exercise and what inspired your choices. Take a moment to write down common issues you prioritize. This discussion will guide your family as you develop a plan on where you want to direct your generosity.



## Additional Thoughts for Discussion

To help you further identify where you want to focus your generosity, consider the following questions.

**Are there certain geographic areas you want to focus your giving?**

**Is there a specific population that you are passionate about serving?**

**Are there ways for our family to be generous with our time and/or talents, not just our treasures?**

**What's your "why"? Aside from your family's unique areas of interest, is there a particular reason "why" you want to give to a certain cause?**



### ► **STEP THREE – Creating Goals and Budget**

When it comes to deciding how to be generous stewards of the gifts you have been given, your family should decide how generous you want to be. In steps one and two, your family identified your shared values and areas of impact. Next, please discuss with your family how to best further those shared goals by leveraging the resources God has entrusted to you.

Here are some questions to consider when deciding how much to give:

**How can your previously discussed values shape your goals for charitable giving?**

**Is there a specific timeline you hope to achieve these goals?**

**How will you allocate your family funding? Will you give collectively or will each family member decide where they want to give?**

#### **TIPS TO CONSIDER WHEN CREATING A FAMILY GENEROSITY BUDGET**

- Decide if you want to give monthly, quarterly or annually.
- Create short-term and long-term donation amounts.
- Consider including a “stretch gift” in your budget.
- Be sure to include opportunities for unexpected giving in your plan.
- Evaluate current charitable giving and ensure it aligns with your new generosity plan.

**What is your family’s budget for philanthropy?**

## ► **STEP FOUR – Who Will Be Involved?**

One of the most important discussions as part of your generosity planning is deciding who will be involved. It's also important to decide what role each person will play and ensure everyone understands the family's overall goals, objectives and values. Depending on your children's ages, this could also be a great opportunity to discuss your succession plan as a family.



Here are some questions to consider:

**Who is going to participate in your philanthropy?**

**Who will be responsible for setting up generosity planning meetings? How often will you meet?**

**Who will participate in the decision-making process and who will make final decisions?**



**How will you resolve conflicts if you don't agree?**

**Have you discussed a succession plan with your family? Who will carry on your generosity plan?**



## **TIPS FOR GENEROSITY PLANNING BASED ON AGE**

### **Young Children**

- Instead of using big words like “philanthropy” or “generosity”, consider sharing related terms, such as volunteer, donate, and charity. You can work with preschool-aged children to create a list of the good deeds they have done to explain the concepts.
- Remember that actions speak louder than words – very young children are impressionable, so let them see you doing good work!
- Be sure to share stories about causes dear to your own heart with your young children so they understand early on what’s important to you.

### **Elementary & Middle School Children**

- Children this age may be receiving an allowance. Encourage them to divide their earnings between spending, saving and giving.
- At this age, it’s easier for children to connect charitable activities to things they have seen or experienced firsthand instead of events that are farther away and therefore more abstract. Find ways to connect to their interests or current events.

### **High School Children**

- At this age, you can give children the opportunity to introduce causes they care about to friends and family by tying fundraising to events like birthdays and graduation.
- This is a great age to invite your children to attend site visits and make grant recommendations as part of your generosity planning.

### **College and Adult Children**

- Consider providing young adult children with a small amount of money to connect grant making to the interests of younger generations. Giving them full discretion of the funds helps encourage ownership of the process, as opposed to simply inviting grant requests.
- If your children get involved with groups on campus or join the board of a local non-profit after college, show up and lend your support at events. This could provide the motivation for them to remain engaged within the community and future generosity.

## ► STEP FIVE – Start Hosting Family Generosity Meetings



Your Generosity Meetings are unique to your family. If you have younger children at home, you might meet monthly. Your family meetings may only take place quarterly or annually if you have older children or grandchildren to include in the discussions. Aside from discussing your philanthropic goals, be sure to discuss the impact your generosity plan will have as your family giving grows. Share stories about the organizations you choose to support and how your family giving made a difference through various avenues of generosity.

To best use your time together, it might be helpful to develop an agenda. You can use this sample as a great start!

### SAMPLE FAMILY GENEROSITY MEETING AGENDA

- **Opening prayer**

*Dear Lord teach me to be generous; teach me to serve you as you deserve, to give and not to count the cost, to fight and not to heed the wounds, to toil and not to seek for rest, to labor and not to ask for reward, save that of knowing that I do your will. Amen.*

- **Affirmations/Appreciations**

*Take a few minutes for each family member to appreciate, compliment or acknowledge another person or positive event in their life.*

- **Confirm giving goals/Guidelines**

- **Discuss new giving opportunities or ideas**

- **Vote on charitable gifts**

- **Share previous charitable impact stories**

- **Closing prayer**

*Example: Lord, we thank you for the opportunity to gather today. We thank you for our daily provisions and the life you have granted us. We know that this generosity would not be possible without the gifts you have blessed us with. Thank you for the wisdom you have imparted to each one of us and for the guiding love that kept us on the right track. Amen.*

*Note: You could also close with your family's favorite prayer or take turns having each family member lead prayer.*

## ► **STEP SIX – Get Involved**

Generous giving of time, talent and treasure often defines what it means to be a Christian. The gifts we have received are not ours alone. God gave them to us for the purpose of serving him and other people. Each of us has something to give. If possible, consider engaging in one or two activities as a family before your next family meeting. This is a great opportunity to do good work and expand your charitable reach beyond just financial support.



### **IDEAS FOR FAMILY ACTIVITIES**

- Serve a monthly meal at a homeless shelter
- Mentor young parents at a pregnancy resource center
- Read weekly to students at an underserved school
- Help with a community-wide cleanup
- Write cards to nursing home residents that don't have family
- Connect with your local Knights of Columbus council if you need help finding opportunities to serve as a family





At KCCF, we know that life changes and your ability to give will naturally change as well. No matter what stage of life you're in, there is always an opportunity to begin a legacy of generosity. Regardless of how much or how often you choose to give, establishing a generosity plan will enable different generations of your family to get involved in causes you care about. Whatever you decide, you can know that you're giving intentionally to maximize your impact.

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For additional guidance or resources, Knights of Columbus Charitable Fund is here to help.

[KnightsCharitable.org](https://KnightsCharitable.org)

1.833.877.0728

[charitablefund@kofc.org](mailto:charitablefund@kofc.org)

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Knights of Columbus Charitable Fund | One Columbus Plz. | New Haven, CT 06510 | [charitablefund@kofc.org](mailto:charitablefund@kofc.org)