



Foundation for the Diocese of Helena

FAITH IN ACTION

GRANT GUIDELINES

The Foundation conducts an annual grant program for the parishes, mission, school, programs, and ministries within the Diocese of Helena. Since its inception in 2007, the Foundation has given more than \$1 million in grants within our Diocese. The Foundation has a passion for grants that evangelize the good news of our Christ Jesus.

Grant Policies

Types of Grants Awarded

The Foundation grants provide funding to multiply the faith of people within our Diocese, including:

- Projects that bring Christ to your community
- Ideas that encourage people to return to the Faith
- Ways to share the Word of God
- Ministries that help the people in our communities suffering from poverty, discrimination and/or violence
- Grants to help subsidize parish ministry funds that provide scholarships to youth or others for ministerial experiences and training sponsored within the diocese.

What the Grants **DO NOT** support:

- Capital improvements/repairs
- Multi-year grants
- Ongoing salary support
- Endowments
- Tuition assistance for students
- Emergency projects in need of funding
- The Foundation will not make grants to other foundations or to entities not identified and listed in the directory of the Diocese of Helena.

Foundation Mission Statement

The Foundation serves and strengthens the people, parishes, ministries, and apostolic mission of the Diocese of Helena.

All grants will be vetted and awarded at the committee's discretion based on the grant policies and its mission.

Dream BIG!

One transformational grant—up to \$15,000—may be awarded to a grant applicant that actively and imaginatively seeks to build an endeavor aimed at reaching outside the walls of its parish and into its community to bring the Good News and God's love to all people. This is a grant aimed at encouraging our parishes, clergy, and laity to dream big about how to confront the realities of our times by bringing Christ in new and innovative ways to His people. Now more than ever the creativity and life of the Holy Spirit yearns for us to courageously take on this apostolic spirit, and this grant is meant to help procure and launch this New Evangelization.

Grants may be awarded for no more than \$5,000 (other than the Dream Big grant). A parish/ministry may submit more than one grant application during a cycle and more than one grant may be approved for a single entity; however, the total amount awarded to an entity will not exceed \$7,500*.

Reviewing Proposals

Step 1: The Outreach Committee of the Foundation's Board of Trustees prayerfully considers grant applications and recommends distributions of unrestricted funds in accordance with established policies and procedures. Priority is given to applications that evangelize in creative and constructive ways to help meet the apostolic mission.

Step 2: The Board of Trustees gives final approval to grants based on funds available and the priorities of the Foundation. Priority may be given to projects where the Foundation is not the only means of support for the project. Therefore, it is important applicants include in their application the amount raised to date and in-kind support obtained. For applicants requesting 100% of the cost of their project, and for applicants requesting less than \$1,000, the Foundation may request additional information before their application is considered.

The following factors are considered in reviewing proposals:

- ✓ Will funding this project bring more people to Christ?
- ✓ Does this project align with the priorities of the Foundation's mission?
- ✓ Is there benefit to the community?
- ✓ Is there capacity of the applicant to carry out the project?
- ✓ Can the results be clearly defined and measured?
- ✓ Will this project pave the way for future evangelization efforts?
- ✓ Will additional funding be needed beyond the grant period and does the applicant have the capacity to obtain it?
- ✓ Does the Foundation have the funds?

Grant Priorities

In making grants, the Foundation will focus on four broad goals:

1. To help support the evangelization efforts of the parishes/missions and ministries of the Diocese of Helena.
2. To help build strong, supportive communities that reflect Gospel values.
3. To sustain and spread Catholic faith tradition and values through effective programs in local parishes, missions, ministries and schools.
4. To advance the work of the Church by developing effective ordained religious and lay leaders.

Towards these ends, the Foundation supports the following types of activities:

1. Parish and Missions

The Church is only as strong as the collective strength of its parishes and mission and so, the Foundation is committed to the development of vibrant, faith-filled parishes. Special attention is given to strengthening parish and mission leadership and innovative efforts to enrich spiritual life.

Please note: *before grant funds are released, the parish or mission must assure the Foundation that sufficient funds are available for the completion of the project during the fiscal year (July-June) in which the funds are received.*

2. Community Building

To help build strong, supportive communities, the Foundation will support:

- *Initiatives that strengthen families.* Keeping families together in a stable, caring environment is a goal of the Foundation. In this context, special emphasis is placed on fostering faith development in families, good parenting, youth development, and care of the elderly.
- *Initiatives that impact those suffering from poverty, discrimination, and violence.* The Foundation is committed to assisting persons affected by poverty, discrimination, and violence. Specific areas of interest include the integration of new immigrants into society and parish life, aid to victims of violence, and support for those suffering from addictions. The Foundation would also provide support for pro-life educational efforts.
- *Initiatives in support of the Guatemala Mission and The Sycamore Retreat Center.* The Foundation will consider programs that support the Guatemala mission, school and medical clinic as well as the Sycamore Retreat Center.

3. Preschool and Elementary Education

Education has always been an important mission of the Catholic Church. The Foundation will support parish religious education programs and Catholic schools that provide formation for students in preschool through fifth grade. Special emphasis will be given to the following:

- *Religious instruction for youth in parish religious education programs and Catholic schools.* Grants will be given to enhance the training of catechists, teachers and for new curriculum initiatives.
- *Support for Catholic schools serving Native American and at-risk populations.* The Foundation will help Catholic schools with large numbers of children affected by poverty, crime and addictions that need to provide special resources to students such as after-school programs and other forms of support and faith development.

4. Leadership Development

Parishes, schools and agencies must have leaders who are able to engage people in creating a shared vision for the future. A strong emphasis on leadership development for the purpose of better sharing the Word of God is part of the Foundation's grant-making priorities. Specifically, the Foundation supports efforts in the following areas:

- *Ordained clergy education and training.* It is essential that the Church's ministerial formation programs be of the highest quality and accessible to all who wish to participate. The Foundation will provide resources to recruit qualified candidates for the priesthood and permanent diaconate and support their initial formation as well as the continuing education they need to perform their duties. To this end, the Foundation is offering a grant to priests of the Helena diocese for a one-night retreat at The Sycamore Tree (retreat must be taken by June 30, 2026).
- *Staff and volunteer training.* The Church needs well-trained lay leaders as it confronts the challenges of a decreasing number of clergy. The Foundation will support initiatives that provide education and experiences for lay people who are working or planning to work in Church-related ministries.

5. **Youth Ministry Scholarship Fund.** See Youth Ministry Scholarship Guidelines document. The Foundation will help our parishes begin to grow youth scholarship funds to help pay for

youth ministerial experiences within the Diocese of Helena. This is a new program from the Foundation to help our parishes build financial resources for youth formation.

Application Procedures

Submit completed application form and required narrative to
Faith in Action Grant Program
Foundation for the Diocese of Helena
PO Box 1729
Helena, MT 59624.

Envelope must be postmarked no later than June 19, 2026. Late, incomplete, or emailed applications will not be accepted. **Online applications (FDOH.org/grants) must be submitted before midnight on June 19th.**

IMPORTANT: *Applications from a parish must be signed by the pastor or parish administrator.*

Proposals will receive final approval in early August. All applicants will receive written notification of the Board's action with grant funding released shortly thereafter. Monies will not be released until after the signed grant agreement is returned.

Applicants receiving grant funding will be required to:

1. Sign a grant agreement.
2. Provide a report to the Foundation after the project is completed. The schedule of reporting will be communicated to the grant recipient with the grant agreement.

If you have any questions, please contact Margaret Herriges, Engagement and Marketing Officer at the Foundation for the Diocese of Helena: mherriges@dohmt.org, (406) 389-7050.

**The exception to this limit will be the Dream Big transformational grant.*