

ShareLife Speaker Guidelines

Guest speakers are one of the best ways to inspire parishioners to support ShareLife. You can invite a speaker from a ShareLife-funded agency, or parish committee members can deliver their own presentations. These presentations typically take place at Sunday Mass in close proximity to the weekends of the ShareLife Sunday collections.

The following guidelines will help speakers position their talks within the context of the ShareLife campaign.

If you need help preparing your presentation, please contact Kris Dmytrenko, Communications Manager, at 416-934-3400 ext. 572 or kdmytrenko@archtoronto.org.

Facts About ShareLife

- **Mission:** Living the Gospel by providing for those in need
- **Vision:** The Catholic community and its partners responding generously in justice and love
- **Principles:**
 - Reverence for life at all stages
 - Commitment to Catholic Social Teaching
 - Collaboration with stakeholders
 - Responsible and accountable for resources
- One of the core components of the **Pastoral Plan of the Archdiocese of Toronto** is Catholic Outreach in Justice and Love. Since ShareLife is an important part of this outreach, our presentations should incorporate this message in a significant way.
- ShareLife is **more than a second collection**: it is a way we fulfill the Gospel value to “love one another as I have loved you.”
- ShareLife will celebrate **46 years** of meaningful service to the greater community in 2022.
- ShareLife was created in **1976** as a single means of funding Catholic Charities, St. Augustine’s Seminary, and Third World Missions and Development. At that time, our parish goal was \$1.9 million.
- In 2022, our parish campaign goal is **\$13.8 million**. You can ask the parish you’re speaking at to provide you their specific goal and progress towards that goal.
- ShareLife provides funding and grants to **40 Catholic agencies every year**. Most of these agencies provide social services, while a few specifically strengthen our faith community. For more information, please see the [ShareLife Agency List](#).
- ShareLife-funded agencies are divided into the following categories:
 - Family Services
 - Children and Youth
 - People with Special Needs
 - Seniors
 - Single and Teen Parents
 - Immigrants and Refugees
 - International Development and Missions
 - Education of Clergy
- ShareLife funded social service agencies have an open intake policy, helping anyone in need **regardless of religious affiliation**.
- In 2022, over **\$14.9 million** will be allocated to ShareLife-funded agencies, including over **\$800,000** to development and pastoral projects in the Global South.
- ShareLife funding supported the education of **56 seminarians** at St. Augustine’s Seminary and Redemptoris Mater Missionary Seminary during the 2021-2022 academic year.

Structure Your Talk

Begin by considering...

- When you will speak (at homily or end of Mass)
- Length of talk (usually 6-8 minutes)
- General profile of parish (e.g., age, ethnicity)
- Specific concerns of parishioners (e.g., unemployment, elderly population)

Positioning your talk

- Root your message in the Gospel values we hold as a Catholic community.
- Note the ShareLife-funded agencies in your area and how they help those most in need in your community. (See accompanying document *ShareLife Agency List*.)
- Consider specific issues in your community that ShareLife agencies focus on (e.g., homeless youth, domestic violence, mental health).
- Though a local perspective is always excellent, ensure your talk opens and closes with reference to ShareLife and the scope of work covered by all of our agencies. Some sample openings and closings are included should you wish to make use of one of our formats.
- A sample campaign speech is posted at sharelife.org/resources/sample-speech. Feel free to use it as part of your parish campaign effort.

Real-life stories

- Experts say real-life stories are the best way to capture the audience's attention, especially when it comes to social services and fundraising.
- Relevant statistics can be useful, but be careful not to overwhelm or confuse your audience.

Tips for Speakers

It's common to feel intimidated before speaking in front of a group. The following tips may help, regardless of how much public speaking experience you have.

- **Familiarize** yourself with ShareLife's activities, scope and agencies.
- **Write out** your speech first, then pare it down to essentials.
- **Transfer your speech** to index cards or a format that is easy to read. Number the cards consecutively. Use large type, double spacing and wide margins. Highlight key words and sentences.
- **Practice** your presentation. Time it for length.
- **Walk confidently** to where you will speak when introduced.
- **Be yourself.**
- **Feel confident.** As the speaker, you're the expert.
- **Make eye contact** with the congregation as much as possible.
- **Speak with warmth and sincerity.** Remember that you are acting as an ambassador of ShareLife.
- **Be ready to answer questions** from the congregation after Mass. Be polite and tactful.
- **Relax** and breathe deeply before speaking. As you begin, you will feel more confident.
- **Maintain proper posture.** Be conscious not to fidget or keep your hands in your pockets. Small movements can easily distract your audience.
- **Speak at a natural pace.** When nervous, most people speed up their presentation. Don't rush through your valuable information.

Sample Openings

- Good morning. My name is _____ and I am a member of the ShareLife Committee here at our parish. I would like to thank Father _____ for allowing me to speak about ShareLife as we begin the annual appeal in our parishes. Over the next few moments, I would like to share how we are bringing the hands of Christ to those in need. Through our annual ShareLife appeal, this is how we can fulfill the Gospel message to love one another. We invite you to see yourself as a steward of God's many gifts – to give back in thanksgiving for all that you've received.
- This year's campaign represents ShareLife's 46th year of helping the whole community through its agencies. ShareLife's mission is "living the Gospel by providing for those in need." This reminds us that ShareLife agencies bring the hands of Christ to the marginalized in our community and around the world. It is refreshing to know that people can turn to an agency that provides services in a faith environment. Your support makes this possible.
- You may be aware that ShareLife began in 1976. However, the extension of charity in our archdiocese goes back to the mid 1800's. Our first Bishop, Michael Power, helped those who came to Toronto to escape the Great Famine in Ireland. He contracted typhus while carrying out this work and died from the disease in 1847. Ten years later, Bishop de Charbonnel invited the Sisters of St. Joseph to establish Providence Healthcare. This agency still serves our community over 160 years later. Today, our annual ShareLife appeal supports the work of over 40 agencies. These agencies carry out the mission work of the church to serve the poor not only here in our archdiocese, but also across the world. Over the next few moments, I would like to tell you how we bring the hands of Christ to those in need through the generosity of our parishioners.

Sample Closings

- These stories of transformation show that wonders abound in the work of ShareLife agencies. ShareLife has been changing lives for over 40 years. But this legacy will not continue unless we, as a Catholic community, support these agencies as they carry out the mission work of the church. With your generous support, they will continue to bring the hands of Christ to those in need on a daily basis. By giving to ShareLife, you are indeed fulfilling the Gospel value to "love one another as I have loved you." I thank you for your generosity as we bring the message of the Gospel to the greater community through ShareLife.
- In 1976, the ShareLife appeal went door-to-door across the city. We've come a long way since then! The needs of our agencies are greater than ever. As a Catholic community, we are called to support their work as they fulfill the Gospel value to love one another. Please consider ShareLife as an important part of your charitable giving this year. Remember, the person you help may be the one sitting beside you at Mass today. Your gift will be used responsibly and effectively to make a difference that could last a lifetime.
- I hope that, over the last few minutes, you've seen how ShareLife allows us to "Live the Gospel." Please take a moment to consider your ability to assist your brothers and sisters in Christ. I invite you to support the 2022 ShareLife campaign with a sacrificial gift. I would like to thank Father for the opportunity to speak about ShareLife during the Masses this weekend. I'll be at the back of the church after Mass to answer any questions you may have. Together, let us keep living the Gospel by providing for those in need! Thank you.

Closing Statement

Always remember to **TIP!**

Thank those who have made a contribution

Invite all to consider a sacrificial gift and

Pray for the success of the 2022 campaign

Welcoming a Speaker to Your Parish

You may be welcoming a speaker from ShareLife or one of its agencies. Speakers from our agencies are powerful advocates in conveying the ShareLife message and putting a face to the charitable cause. Their experiences provide a rich source of stories and examples.

While sharing a personal story may be powerful, it can be very difficult for many agency clients. Since it may be the first time they are speaking in front of a large parish group, they may find it intimidating to share such personal experiences. Therefore, we ask you to welcome speakers to your parish in an appropriate manner. Here are some things to consider when inviting a speaker into your parish:

- Make sure the speaker knows when he/she will be speaking (during the homily, after communion, etc.) and the number, times and languages of the Masses. This will prevent any confusion from either side.
- When the speaker arrives at your parish, ensure someone is present to welcome him/her. Should he/she go directly to the back of the church to meet the pastor? Or will a ShareLife committee member meet the speaker in the parish hall? Welcome him/her warmly.
- Ask your speaker how he/she would like to be introduced. This can go a long way in adding credibility to his/her talk. It is also an opportune time to update the congregation on your parish campaign.

Example: "Jesus calls us to love one another as I have loved you. In our archdiocese, the ShareLife appeal helps us fulfill this Gospel value by serving the marginalized, not only in our communities, but also around the world. Our parish goal is \$_____ and so far we have raised \$_____ toward this. This weekend I have invited _____ from _____, one of the agencies that benefits from our ShareLife campaign, to speak to us about how their agency is helping bring the hands of Christ to those in need."

- At the end of the presentation, publicly thank the speaker. Then, to help reinforce his/her message, spend a few moments talking about how ShareLife funding has helped the community. For example, the pastor may have referred parishioners to an agency for counselling. Or he may have been educated at St. Augustine's Seminary and discerned his vocation at Serra House. Stress the importance of the campaign to the parish and archdiocese. Remind parishioners how ShareLife agencies are fulfilling the mission work of the church. Thank those who have made a gift to the campaign, and invite those who have not to do so.
- Ensure there are envelopes in the pews so parishioners may contribute after hearing the speakers' presentation.
- If a visiting priest is presiding at Mass on the same weekend a ShareLife speaker is presenting, ensure the priest is aware of the arrangement, especially the timing of the presentation.
- If you wish to invite the speaker to share a meal with you, provide advance notice so he/she can make the appropriate personal arrangements. (Speakers may feel awkward turning down an invitation for a meal they received only a few minutes beforehand.)
- Is there an area where your speaker can relax between Masses? Since speakers sometimes need to present at 2-3 Masses, make him/her feel at home.
- Ask the speaker if he/she will be comfortable answering questions from parishioners after Mass. If yes, lead him/her to an area accessible to parishioners and comfortable for the speaker (e.g., vestibule or by the entrance).
- Thank your speaker for giving his/her time and sharing personal reflections with your community. The speaker's presentation helps put a face to the ShareLife campaign.
- If possible, send a sincerely written note to thank the speaker. While you likely thanked the speaker personally when he/she came to present, a note will reinforce your appreciation of the time and effort.
- If your parish experiences any issues with a speaker booking, please contact ShareLife at 416-934-3411 or slife@archtoronto.org. We will work with you to ensure an agency presentation goes ahead as scheduled.