

CUSTOMER SPOTLIGHT

Diocese of Trenton



DIOCESE of
TRENTON

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—Christine Prete, Associate Director of Development Operations

With 39 Catholic schools to support, Diocese of Trenton wanted to reach beyond its annual alumni appeal and search for wider fundraising sources. Through a partnership with Blackbaud, the diocese launched a quick peer-to-peer fundraising campaign that attracted 131 new donors and raised tens of thousands of dollars for its schools.

Diocese of Trenton launches peer-to-peer fundraising campaign in weeks and gains 131 new donors.

Diocese of Trenton’s team realized at bbcon®, Blackbaud’s annual user conference, that peer-to-peer fundraising could revolutionize #GivingTuesday for their network of Catholic parishes and schools. The problem? #GivingTuesday was only six weeks away.

For years, the diocese had relied solely on alumni support to cover campaigns for its 35 grammar schools and four high schools in the New Jersey community. “We quickly seized this opportunity and launched the #GivingTuesday campaign side by side with the annual alumni mailing,” explained Christine Prete, associate director of development operations. “With peer-to-peer fundraising, we were able to get access to broader Catholic school supporters we might not have considered.”

Diocese of Trenton is powered by Blackbaud solutions for:

- ✓ Peer-to-peer fundraising
- ✓ Advocacy
- ✓ Modeling and prospect research
- ✓ Data enrichment services
- ✓ Marketing services
- ✓ Payment services
- ✓ Fundraising and relationship management

By partnering with Blackbaud, Diocese of Trenton launched its first peer-to-peer fundraising campaign in two short weeks and pulled in nearly \$18,000 on #GivingTuesday alone. Since the campaign extended through the alumni campaign, the total reached over \$60,000—a sum that will help cover technology, scholarships, and other pressing needs at Catholic schools in and around the four counties served by the diocese.

“Our alumni program started in 2013 and was only targeted to alumni,” Prete said. “We knew that opening up Catholic school support to alumni, parishioners, and family members would have a larger impact on our efforts, and it did!”

Each school could fundraise individually, with guidance from the diocese to keep communication consistent. “Schools had the ability to raise money for whatever they needed most,” Prete said. “They increased engagement and found new supporters.” In fact, that campaign acquired 131 donors previously unaffiliated with the diocese’s school fundraising efforts.

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Approximately
\$60,000
in gifts

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Launched campaign in
2 weeks

Partnering for Growth

Prete moved from the diocese’s information technology team to its development office one week before launching an unrelated fundraising effort, a \$75 million endowment campaign. The diocese’s largest fundraising push in its history, this campaign not only satisfied immediate building and ministry needs at the parishes but provided critical funds for several trusts that will help to sustain the diocese for decades.

Prete said partnering with Blackbaud on data and analytics helped the diocese work toward its goal and also supported her transition at such a critical time through professional development opportunities. “I knew nothing about fundraising,” she remembered. “I embraced Blackbaud, because I could get the training I needed to succeed and grow.”

Prete soon identified efficiencies from having the right technology in place. For example, she noticed how much time the finance department spent calling each donor whose credit card expired and how Blackbaud’s Credit Card Updater automated that process.

Previously, the diocese experienced 10 to 15 declined credit cards every day, touching off a paper mailing with follow-up by phone. With Credit Card Updater, that number dropped to one or two declined cards—reducing the calls from as many as 450 per month to as few as 30.

“The results with Credit Card Updater have been—and continue to be—amazing,” Prete said. “We pay a minimal fee for something that has significantly decreased our workload.”





Planning for the Future

Moving forward, Prete's team intends to use Blackbaud's flagship fundraising solution to empower individual parishes to build stronger relationships. "We want to automate so that one person in our office isn't constantly sending lists," Prete said. "Instead, we can connect all the parishes."

The Diocese of Trenton team is considering how Blackbaud Church Management™ software could take that capability to the next level by connecting everyone from congregants to staff and volunteers across the diocese through a single source of information. Armed with that solution, each parish could fuel future campaigns through segmented data and personalized relationships, while also providing visibility into trends at the diocese office. For Prete, success comes down to just that: thoughtful engagement and effective communication.

"The average age of our donor is 65 or older," Prete said. "We want to get people more engaged with their parish or through the diocese. How do we do that? That's what we're working on now, with Blackbaud's help."

Empower everyone who cares about your cause to raise funds and grow support for your organization.

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Photos courtesy of the Diocese of Trenton/The Monitor

About Blackbaud

Leading uniquely at the intersection point of technology and social good, Blackbaud connects and empowers organizations to increase their impact through cloud software, services, expertise, and data intelligence. We serve the entire social good community, which includes nonprofits, foundations, companies, education institutions, healthcare organizations, and the individual change agents who support them.

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