

Diocese of
Winona-Rochester

ISSUE 14

FINANCE TIMES

FALL 2019

For Parishes, Schools and Cemeteries throughout the Diocese of Winona-Rochester

From the Desk of the Finance Officer

Andrew D. Brannon, CPA, Chief Finance & Administrative Officer • abrannon@dowr.org

Hello Everyone,

Just as the church has liturgical seasons, so do accountants in service to the church. By now, you are all knee deep in closing out your fiscal year, submitting your annual reports and keeping up with the duties of beginning a new fiscal year, all while navigating new challenges in keeping up with the administrative tasks of your parish. To help with that, we are providing information in this issue of the Finance Times to help with topics that go beyond everyday bookkeeping.

Recurring Giving – this information is a recap of an article published by ParishSoft, which offers essential elements of a recurring giving program. All parishes face mounting budget pressure when offertory support takes a dip. These tips may help you increase offertory support through automatic weekly or monthly gifts.

ParishSoft Accounting and Family Suite Data Security – this article provides tips on cleaning up your user list. Monitoring and maintaining your user list will provide you and your pastor with the peace of mind that only authorized current users have access to your parish’s data.

Festivals and Fundraising – Check out this article for links to the MN Gambling Board rules and regulations. Knowing the rules can help keep your parish from running afoul of the gambling laws.

Merging Parishes 101 – We have found that some parishes have merged in spirit, but have not taken the appropriate steps to merge their accounting records. This article provides step by step procedures for completing that process.

As always, I express my appreciation for all that you do for your parishes. In recent months, members of the Diocesan Curia have specifically focused on Missionary Discipleship. Specifically, how diocesan and parish staff can provide opportunities for all people to encounter Christ. As the face to the public within your parish, often people first encounter you before they encounter Christ. Thank you for being Christ-like in that encounter. You set the example for turning administrative service into missionary discipleship!

Missionary Cooperative Summer 2019 - Office of Society of the Propagation of the Faith

Mary Hamann • mhamann@dowr.org

Each year, every parish in the Diocese of Winona-Rochester is asked to host a speaker from a mission diocese, organization, or a religious order along with many other dioceses of the United States Catholic Church through the Society for the Propagation of the Faith (SPOF). The mission appeal provides opportunities for prayer and financial support of the poorest of poor throughout the world. Evangelization is a primary aspect of the mission groups. The care and feeding of these men, women and children opens their hearts to understanding that they too are children of God. The **Mission Cooperative Plan** also allows those who live and work in parts of the world that most of us will never visit, to educate us, and to help us live out our baptismal call.

Please make sure that you send the monies collected for these missionaries mailed to the Diocese of Winona-Rochester – Special Collections by the end of September so we can forward the funds quickly to help those in the most need in our world.

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Blue Cross Blue Shield (BCBS) “Coordination of Benefits”

Julia Sandsness • benefits@dowr.org

“Coordination of Benefits” comes in different formats: the employee may get a letter, which may look like junk mail, or it may be on an “Explanation of Benefits” (EOB) as a rejected claim.

As soon as employee who has had a claim(s) rejected because they may be covered by other insurance, the employee should contact BCBS “Coordination of Benefits” at 855-899-1230. BCBS also randomly checks coverage on dependents. If an employee is getting close to turning 65, they will receive a letter from BCBS asking if they have other coverage. An employee does not have to apply for Medicare Part A, but it is to their advantage to apply for it because there is no charge for it.

When the employee calls the 855-899-1230 number, an automated system has you enter information

- 1 – If the employee or dependents have other insurance, press “1” and the employee gives the information to an agent. The agent updates the employee’s information and the phone call ends.
- 2 – If the employee or dependents have no other insurance, press “2” and the phone call ends.

After contacting “Coordination of Benefits” for rejected claims, BCBS will reprocess the claims with the provider(s) and it takes about 45-60 days to process. The employee may want to contact the provider to let them know the status of the claims.

We’d like to thank all of you who attended the ParishSOFT Roadshow and the Human Resources and Accounting Workshops. As usual, we learned a lot from you and we hope you were able to take something away, too.

Thank you for all you do for the parishes and for the Diocese of Winona-Rochester. We truly appreciate your dedication and hard work!



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“I downloaded them from a cloud.”

3 Essential Elements of a Recurring Giving Program

Article originally published by ParishSOFT online, December 26, 2018

Recurring giving programs continue to grow in popularity for parishes and parishioners alike. Churches appreciate recurring gifts because they help with forecasting and donor retention. Parishioners and donors love the program because it's convenient and simple to incorporate into their budget.

While the average recurring gift is \$50, givers tend to increase their set amount over time. Even when involved in the program, these types of givers are more aligned with the ministry's causes and likely to give one-time donations as well. In fact, those that use recurring giving features contribute 42% more annually.

Among the benefits listed above, and other perks such as sustainability and increasing church giving, you can see why this is a top priority for many parishes. So, whether you're starting your first recurring giving program, or you want to grow membership this year, here are 3 essential elements to ensure you succeed.

1. ONLINE GIVING TOOLS

The first element to put in place is online giving tools. When utilizing ParishSOFT Giving's features, parishes saw a 32% increase in monthly online giving. It makes sense because the average parishioner attends mass 37 weeks out of the year, leaving 15 weeks that they may not have the opportunity to give (or they forget). By having recurring online giving tools in place, your ministry can give whether they're at mass or elsewhere.

Recurring givers enjoy conveniences such as being able to set the frequency of gifts as well as to tithe at separate intervals. While monthly gifts are the most common frequency set, donors can give weekly, bi-weekly, or choose another consistent giving schedule. And if there is a special church event, members can easily contribute at the giving kiosk, on the donation page, or other ways like the mobile giving app.

And be sure to use branded donations pages for recurring giving programs. Branded donation pages can raise 7X more gifts, and increase your recurring giving program membership. A donation page with your parish's brand displayed makes the sign-up experience more familiar and trustworthy. It also lets the visitor know they're in the right place versus being sent to a page outside of your organization.

2. A GESTURE OF APPRECIATION

To help encourage members to join the parish's recurring giving program, you want them to feel special and show gratitude. A gesture of appreciation is the ideal way to achieve this. While these gestures should be fun and designed to thank the donor, they should also be educational and address the results of the gifts. Here are some ideas:

An annual event: This could be anything from a summer cookout to a formal dinner. Highlight how the recurring donations helped the ministry reach yearly goals and personally thank everyone for their loyalty.

A monthly video update or newsletter: Include extended information on how the recurring donations have impacted the parish and improved the community.

A handwritten thank you letter: Show appreciation to recurring titheers with a personalized handwritten message. You can send this on their sign-up anniversary or schedule them on the same day each year.

You can also provide a gesture of appreciation tailored for first-time recurring givers. One example would be a welcome package that's filled with material about the parish's mission and a bookmark with a verse about the rewards of giving on it.

3. A PLAN TO ENCOURAGE PARISHIONERS AND DONORS TO JOIN

Once you have the first two elements in place, it's time to encourage people to join. Begin by incorporating the promotion for recurring giving into current generosity campaigns. Educate givers on the features of the program and the mission of the church. You can also inspire existing parishioners and donors to increase their current gift.

Also, send an invitation via email that focuses attention on the conveniences and benefits of recurring giving. For those that are on the fence, suggest starting with a low number to test it out. Even \$5 a month from a few titheers can increase giving.

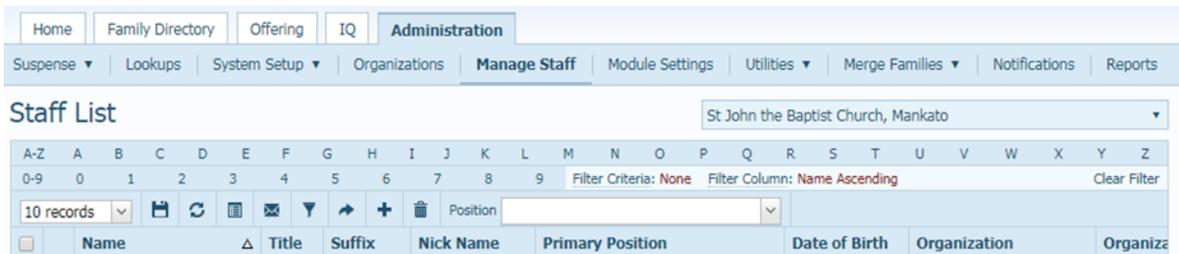
Be available to answer questions about recurring giving, and let people know they can stop the program anytime. As you continue to encourage new parishioners to join, take note of what inspires givers to sign up, and apply these techniques in your next generosity campaign. While it takes time to cultivate a recurring giving program, the effort is truly worth it.

Even More House Cleaning...

How are your lists of people with access to ParishSOFT Family Suite and Accounting looking these days? I frequently find out, well after the fact, that multiple people have left but they still have access to the church's database and accounting software. Help me out!

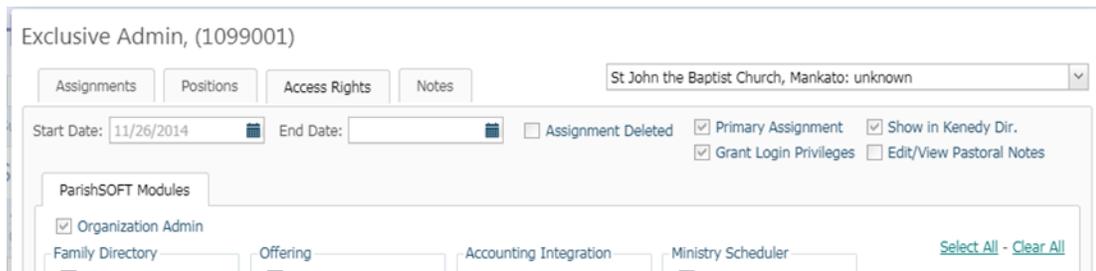
1. Family Suite

A. If you are the church administrator, click on the Administration tab and then Manage Staff.



B. Check the names on the list and, if they no longer need access to the program, inactivate them.

i. Click on the person's name and you should see a screen showing their current access to the program



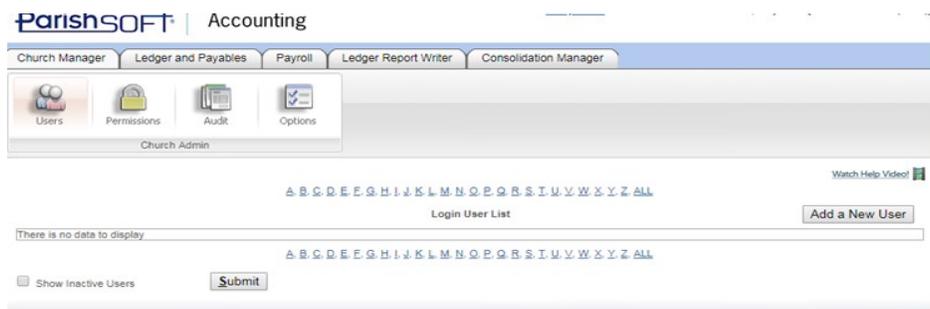
ii. If they no longer need access, click on Edit Details, and check the Assignment Deleted check box. Using the drop down menu check to see if there are other locations with the log-in privileges and check the Assignment Deleted box there as well.

iii. Save and close and they should no longer appear on the staff list.

2. Accounting

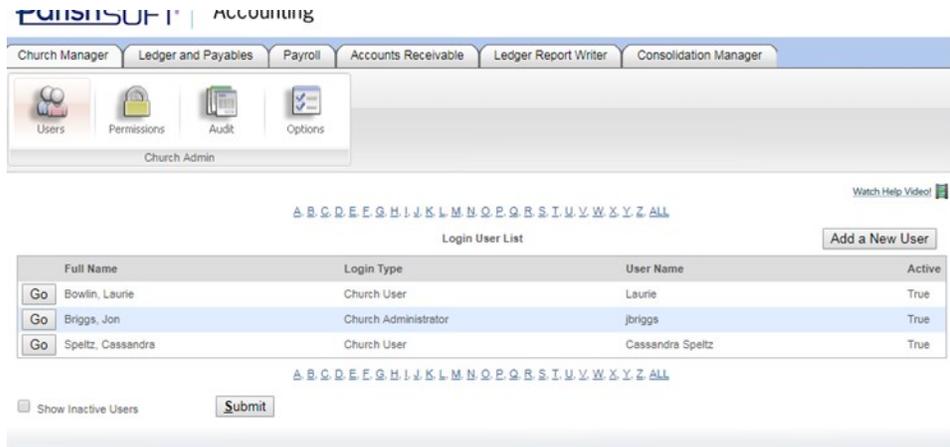
A. If you are the church administrator, click on the Church Manager tab.

B. You may or may not see any users listed. This depends on whether you are a clustered parish or not.



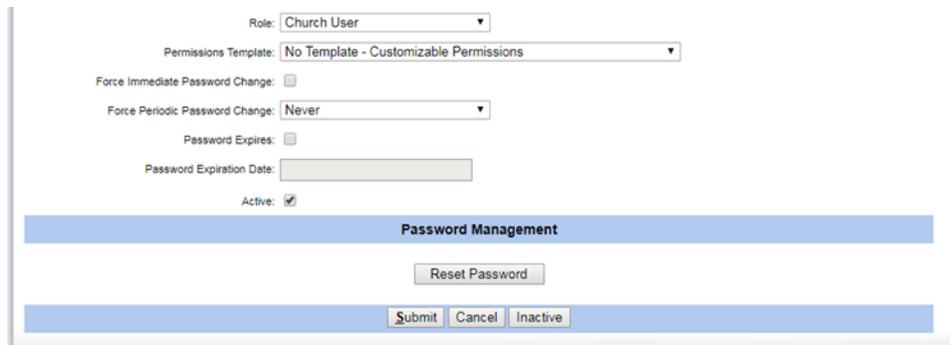
Office of Finance: Parish Accounting Support

Cindy Olson • parishsupport@dowr.org



C. If you do not see any names, please come up with a list of people who should have access to your parish or clustered parishes and send it to me (Parishsupport@dowr.org) and I will verify the list with my global user list and make corrections as needed.

D. If you do see people on the list and some of them should not be on the list, you are able to click on “Go” and remove the check mark in the Active box to inactivate the user.



It won't take long to do this and it helps with your data security! If you are not the administrator, contact me & I'll look to see who is (if anyone). Each organization should have at least one administrator.

Festival, Fundraising Events and Gambling Laws...

Festival season is almost here and, in some cases, it is here all year long! How is your knowledge of the MN Gambling Board rules and regulations? Do you know when you need a license and specifics on the procedures required? Here are some links to help you out.

1. Gambling Manual – there is a complete gambling manual available at the MN Gambling Control website: <https://mn.gov/gcb/lawful-gambling-manual.html>
2. If you are just conducting raffles, here is the chapter on raffles. <https://mn.gov/gcb/assets/ch-7-raffles-2017.pdf>
3. All forms are available online and, in many cases, they are fillable forms. <https://mn.gov/gcb/exemptexcluded.html>
4. Do you have specific questions about gambling? Feel free to contact your assigned representative. <https://mn.gov/gcb/board-staff.html>

Did you know that you are able to schedule a gambling board representative to speak to your fundraising leaders (or perhaps the fundraising leaders for your deanery)? <https://mn.gov/gcb/speaking-requests.html>

Need more information? <https://mn.gov/gcb/index.html>

Office of Finance: Parish Accounting Support

Cindy Olson • parishsupport@dowr.org**Help! I Turned on the 'Due To/Due From' Feature...Now What?**

Due to / Due From keeps us in balance when we enter transactions that cross entities. Some of the most common situations and solutions are:

1. I entered a bill for the school into the parish accounts payable account. An example would be a bill making this entry:
 - A. Debit: Office Supplies – School \$10.00 Credit: Parish Accounts payable (the accounts payable account selection is made at the top of the bill screen and it will stay the same until you change it so be aware!) \$10.00

The screenshot shows a 'Bill Information' form with the following fields and values:

- AP Account: Accounts Payable - Vendors: L-10-00-20-2105-00 2105AP00P00
- Balance: 26,227.56
- Bill Number: 4607
- Invoice Number: (empty)
- Vendor: New Vendor
- Invoice Date: 07/15/2019
- Due Date: 08/14/2019
- Discount Date: (empty)
- Terms: (empty)
- Comment: (empty)

- B. Now the system will make this entry to rebalance:
 - i. Debit: 2350AP00P00 \$10.00 Credit: 2350AP00S00 \$10.00
 - C. If this bill and its payment are in the same month and the payment is made from the correct checking account (the school's in this case), no correction is needed. When the bill is paid, the system will make a second entry reversing the first entry and all will be well.
 - D. If this bill and its payment are not in the same month, I would suggest this correcting entry:
 - ii. Debit: 2105AP00P00 \$10.00 Credit 2105AP00S00 \$10.00. **Make sure you check the reversing entry box so the entry will reverse itself the next month.** This will be your temporary fix until the bill is paid when the system makes its own entry.
2. The parish handles the payroll for both the parish and school and when an employee for the school is set up, the expenses are coded to the school's gross wage account instead of the parish's accounts receivable from the School Account.
 - A. First, fix the employee record so that the wages are going to the 1205ARXXP00 receivable from school account.
 - B. You correct one of a two ways.
 - i. Enter a bill in the school's AP account debiting the parish Accounts Receivable account (causing the system to generate a second entry to 2350 reversing the first one from the payroll system). -OR-
 - ii. Use a JE to credit all the school wage related accounts that were debited in the original payroll and debit the parish's Accounts Receivable account from the school instead. You would then enter the bill in the school's AP account debiting the correct school wage related expense accounts.
3. I transferred money from the school to the parish and recorded it as a JE between the checking accounts.
 - A. Initial entry was: Debit Parish Checking account, credit School Checking account and the system made its balancing entry to the 2350 accounts.
 - B. To correct:
 - i. I would suggest deleting the original JE and instead showing a bill in the school's side debiting the correct school expense account and crediting the school's AP 2105 account. The payment would debit the school's AP account and credit the school's checking account (enter with a check number such as TRSF07012019). (On the parish side, enter a deposit debiting the parish accounts receivable from the school account.)
 - ii. You could also put in a JE debiting the appropriate school expense and crediting the parish accounts receivable from school account.

These are just a few situations and the solutions that you could use. Make sure your JE's or correcting entries have complete explanations so you will remember what you did later! And, train yourself to pay close attention to the AP account at the top of the bill screen and the checking account you are using to pay bills. If you find your corrections are taking you in circles, give me a call!

Office of Finance: Parish Accounting Support

Cindy Olson • parishsupport@dowr.org

Merging Parishes 101

What do you do in ParishSOFT if parishes in your cluster are closing and merging with a different parish?

1. Please let me know which parish is closing and which parish is the receiving parish.
2. Determine the date of the merger. If the parish is closing during a month, please use the last day of the month in ParishSOFT accounting.
3. As of that date, enter the trial balance for the closing parish into the books of the receiving parish into funding source 40 (41, 42 if there are multiple closing parishes in your cluster).
4. All transactions after the last day of the closing month are now entered under the receiving parish and you are able to run the Parish Annual Report for the closing parish.
5. Contact me to end your ParishSOFT accounting license for the closing parish.
6. On the Family Suite side, please move the members of the closing parish to the receiving parish as registered.
7. Once there are no more registered members in the closing parish, run the contribution statements for the calendar year to the date of closing.
8. Begin entering any contributions subsequent to closing for these members into the receiving parish.
9. Contact me to end the license in Family Suite for the closing parish.

Complete instructions are on the Diocese of Winona-Rochester website: <https://www.dowr.org/offices/finance/connect-now.html>

Life Insurance Benefits

If you are currently recording life insurance as a benefit to your employees through the payroll system, please make sure that you do not have it set up under the taxable life insurance benefit category. This category will add the value to the W-2 of the employee as taxable wages. Instead, the life insurance premium paid by the parish to benefit the employee would be set up as follows (you could use the health insurance benefit template and rename it for the life, ADD, LTD benefits):

Deductions are withheld from employee's check and accumulated in a liability account for payment. Benefits are calculated amounts the employer pays on behalf of the employee. Benefit amounts are accumulated in a liability for payment and are automatically expensed.

Type:

Code Number

Use a code number 11 or higher.

Code Number:

W2 Category

Used for checking applicable boxes for Form W-2 printing.

Category:

Subject to Tax

The amount of this benefit will be added to taxable wage amounts when calculating the checked taxes below, thereby increasing the amount of tax.

Social Security
 Medicare
 Federal
 State
 Local

PARISH CEMETERIES WORKSHOP

SEPTEMBER 11, 2019

9:00 AM—12:00 PM

St. Adrian Parish, Adrian

SEPTEMBER 12, 2019

9:00 AM—12:00 PM

St. Joseph Parish, Owatonna

SEPTEMBER 12, 2019

3:00 PM—6:00 PM

St. Charles Borromeo Parish, St. Charles



Registration / Refreshments

Opening Prayer / Introductions

General Session

- * Reflections on Our Ministry
- * Second Right to Burial
- * Service Fees
- * Coldspring Granite
- * Break
- * Permanent Care Funds
- * Cemetery Accounting
- * General Topics
- * Open Forum
- * Q & A for Bookkeepers



"I am the resurrection and the life; whoever believes in Me, even if he dies, will live...."
 John 11:25

Please check which workshop you'll attend:

- Wed., September 11, 2019 (AM)
- Thurs., September 12, 2019 (AM)
- Thurs., September 12, 2019 (PM)

Name of Parish: _____
 Name of Cemetery: _____
 City: _____

Attendee 1:
 Name: _____
 Telephone: _____
 Email: _____
 Will you be staying for lunch? (circle one) Yes No

Attendee 2:
 Name: _____
 Telephone: _____
 Email: _____
 Will you be staying for lunch? (circle one) Yes No

Please reply to Beth Buswell at bbuswell@dowr.org or call 507-858-1241 on, or before, Thursday, August 29, 2019. Hope to see you there!

Larry Dose, Director of Catholic Cemeteries

