

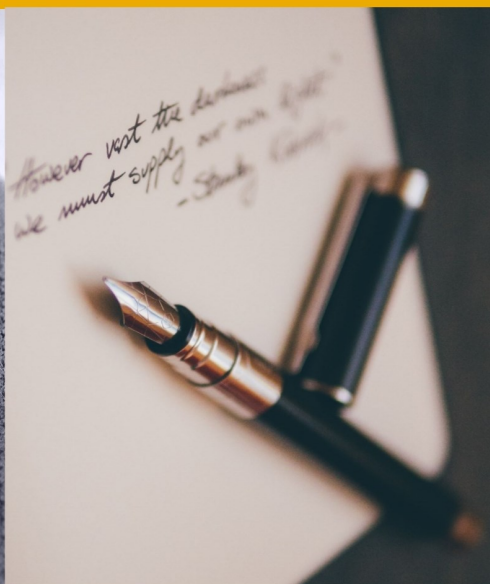
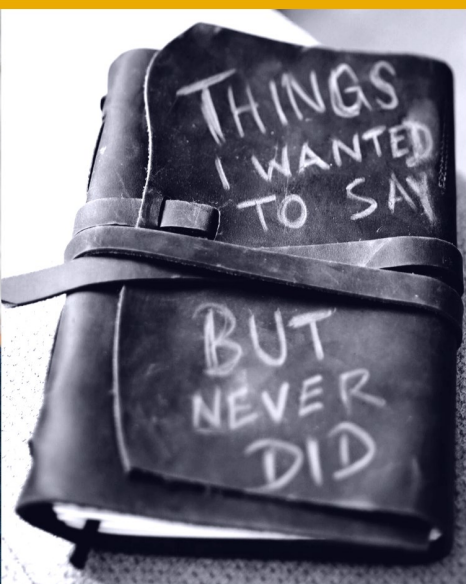


The Catholic Foundation
of Central Florida



Your Catholic Legacy Letter

**Values, Beliefs, Life Lessons
for Future Generations**



Introduction

A Legacy Letter (or Ethical Will) is a memorable keepsake for your family or friends that expresses your values, beliefs, life lessons and blessings. For Catholics desiring to transition their Catholic values and traditions to their children, grandchildren and future generations, the Legacy Letter is an invaluable tool and can be one of the most important gifts you leave for your family. Your words in this Legacy Letter might be more valuable than any assets you leave to your loved ones.

The Catholic Foundation of Central Florida created this Legacy Letter for you to use as a guide as you share your story. In the first few pages of this 5-Step Catholic Legacy Letter organizer, we outline the process and goal. We have also included some questions that may act as writing prompts. Before you get started writing your Legacy Letter, complete the list of questions to crystallize your thoughts and help you to articulate your personal legacy and hopes for the future. Then use the 5-step model to write your letter.

Prayerfully consider the legacy that you have already started creating with your life and what legacy you would like to leave in this world. Sharing stories that your family can continue to tell for generations is one way. Gifts of charity to your parish, school, or favorite ministry is another. Perhaps a combination of both as you provide opportunity for your children and grandchildren to continue the work that you started while transitioning your values and principles and ensuring that the traditions of your faith and family will continue for many years to come. Imagine if all God's faithful stewards of His blessings, would leave a legacy of 1% of their material wealth to their parish, how we could continue to impact lives, promote the Gospel and build the kingdom of God.

Once you have completed your Legacy Letter, consider sharing it with those you love while you are still with them. It can be powerful to share all the hopes and dreams that you have for your family along with all the wisdom, values and principles that you want to transition to them. Remember that this is a personal testimony and is not legally binding in any way and should not take the place of a legal Will.

If you choose not to share the Legacy Letter now, file the letter in an addressed envelope in a safe place (consider keeping a copy in your hard drive or in the "cloud"). Tell your loved ones that you have written it and where they can find it should they need to.

The Catholic Foundation of Central Florida can help you meet your philanthropic goals, sometimes with unique and tax saving giving vehicles that may cost nothing at this time or even provide you income. For more information on how you can reach your philanthropic goals or resources to engage family members in estate planning, please contact Madelyn Weed, CFRE, Vice President of Donor Services at mweed@cfocf.org.

Enjoy creating this Catholic Legacy Letter and may it remind you of all that God has done in your life and all the good that you have done on earth through his grace. May all God's blessings be with you and your family, today and always.

Your Academic and Professional Life

Education and career often defines how we spend our lives.

Elementary_____ Middle_____

High School_____ College_____

Post Grad_____ Other_____

What is the best lesson you learned in school?

How and why did you choose your profession or start your business?

For a spouse that stayed home with children, why did you make that choice?

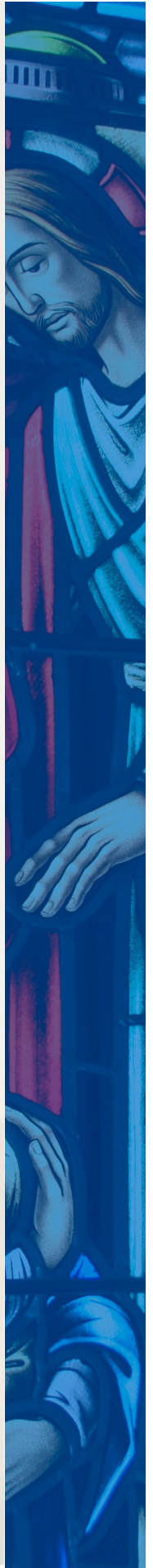
What was your first job?

What was the best job you ever had and why?

What was the worst job you ever had and why?

What workplace career advice can you offer?

If you had to do it over again, would you change anything?





Your Experiences

Trust the first thing that comes to mind

Favorite family holiday traditions:

Events that had the greatest impact on your life:

What are you most proud of?

What are you most grateful for?

What was the happiest moment of your life?

Most important character trait, value, or lesson you learned from your parents or grandparents:

The hardest decision you ever made:

The most difficult time in your life and how you overcame it:

How do you define happiness and success:

Your Hopes for the Future

What you want to share with future generations:

Virtues you value most in life that you would like to pass down:

Hopes and dreams for the future of your children:

Hopes and dreams for the future of your spouse/significant other:

A mistake I made that I hope you can avoid:

An experience I hope you get to have:

When you encounter hardship, this is my motto:

What do you want your family to know about your Catholic faith and what it means to you?

Our family's Catholic traditions and why they are important:

Which Catholic parish/ministry, educational institution, or charitable organization has been the beneficiary of your giving (offertory, volunteer hours or charitable giving)?





5-Steps to Writing Your Legacy Letter

Consider sitting down right now, picking up a pen and putting your love for your friends and family into words. Now, imagine that you are leaving for a vacation or a business trip and you have not told your loved ones everything you want them to know about you, about what matters most to you, about what you hope for them, that you love them beyond measure. What if fate has it that you don't return? What do you want to pass along to them? What impact have they had on your life? What future wishes and blessings you have for them? Reflect about what would be most important to write. Consider specific people, places or experience that have meant most to you in your life.

The model or organizer below provides a five-step structure to make writing your Catholic Legacy Letter simple, uniquely personal and meaningful. A one-page letter written in no more than 15 to 30 minutes using this model can be completed in five paragraphs: the first, history and perspective; the second, your story; the third, sincere reflection or life lessons you learned from your story and recollection; the fourth, your faith and values; the fifth and closing, a blessing (the core and most essential part) that flows from your story, reflection, and faith and values.

History and Perspective: This gives you the opportunity to fill in personal, family and a broad view of history and the period of time of the story and perspective.

Your Story: This helps those that will read the letter connect with you. Just tell your experience in your own words.

Sincere Reflection: This is the time to be personal, vulnerable, imperfect, and share who you really are, deep down inside to your core. Share what you learned from your experiences, proving a deeper meaning to the story that you told in the previous section. This is the time to share about overcoming obstacles and what it meant in your life.

Faith and Values: Why is your Catholic faith and values important and why is it your hope that your children and grandchildren carry on this family legacy. If you have left (or plan to leave) a legacy gift to your parish, school or Catholic ministry share why that was important to you and what impact you hope it will have. This is a powerful way to show how much your faith and values mean to you.

Blessing: The most important part of the letter, this may emerge organically from the other sections of the letter. This is where you can express your love, caring, respect, devotion, and appreciation of the loved one to whom you are writing. Imagine that it is your very last opportunity to bless them with your love.

Now read through the answers your just wrote. Take a few minutes to reflect and consider the following: If you weren't here tomorrow, what would you want your family and friends to know? Use the following pages to write Legacy Letter to them.

My Legacy Letter



To: _____

Dear _____

Love,

My Legacy Letter



To: _____

Dear _____

Love,

The background of the entire page is a circular, stained-glass style illustration of the Holy Family. It depicts Mary, Joseph, and the young Jesus. Mary is on the right, looking down at Jesus. Joseph is on the left, looking towards the center. Jesus is in the center, looking up. The background is composed of various colored panes in shades of blue, green, yellow, and red, separated by dark lines.

The Holy Family Prayer

JESUS, Son of God and Son of Mary, bless our family. Graciously inspire in us the unity, peace, and mutual love that you found in your own family in the little town of Nazareth.

MARY, Mother of Jesus and Our Mother, nourish our family with your faith and your love. Keep us close to your Son, Jesus, in all our sorrows and joys.

JOSEPH, Foster-father to Jesus, guardian and spouse of Mary, keep our family safe from harm. Help us in all times of discouragement or anxiety.

HOLY FAMILY OF NAZARETH, make our family one with you. Help us to be instruments of peace. Grant that love, strengthened by grace, may prove mightier than all the weaknesses and trials through which our families sometimes pass. May we always have God at the center of our hearts and homes until we are all one family, happy and at peace in our true home with you. Amen.



Our Family
A circle of Strength and Love.
Founded on Faith...
Joined by Love...
Kept by God...
Together Forever

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