

Arctic Footprints

News & Ideas for Charitable Giving

Spring 2020

Doing Positive Things for Others

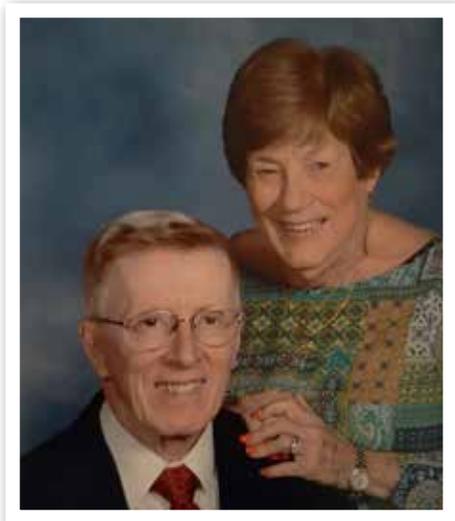
Growing up with a strong Catholic faith and attending Catholic schools, Donald Harrington looked for a way to share his faith and help others as an adult. Once he started reading about the needs in Alaska, he felt it was the right ministry for him to contribute to and make a difference.

Donald grew up in New York City but has called Florida home for 40 years. He first met his wife, Kathy, in fifth grade although they didn't date until college. The Harrington family had a whirlwind adventure of military service, law school and moving 10 times in 20 years. "Kathy was a real sport and the four kids were very adaptable. They would get to the 1½ year point and ask, 'where are we headed next?'" Donald shared.

Donald remembers receiving *The Alaskan Shepherd* newsletter. It was the newsletter's tagline that really stuck with him over the years: "Some give by going to the Missions, some go by giving to the Missions, without both there are no Missions." At that point in his life, he could only help by giving financially.

"Once I retired from my second career in the business world, I went for a visit. I was amazed by the vast and rugged terrain in Alaska and the rough conditions—some homes in rural Alaska lack running water and many more depend on aging piped systems—the people are struggling under. It really made an impression on me," said Donald. He continued, "I don't think many people in the lower 48 states grasp how different it is there. By trying to educate people, hopefully they will want to help."

One long-time Floridian radio host, Carolyn Ketchel, has been crucial in getting the word out on her show, *Christian Perspective*. Donald and an Alaskan guest speaker periodically join Carolyn on the show. They share the widespread needs of the Diocese of Fairbanks and of the Inupiaq, Yup'ik and Athabaskan people, living and serving in the villages and bush parishes there. "In the decade since we started, over 25 different guest speakers from the diocese have been on the program," Donald said.



Donald and Kathy Harrington

Donald and Kathy have taken four trips to Alaska together, and he has gone on his own an additional 10 times. He stresses there are many ways to give back; helping the people in Alaska happens to be where his heart is. "This is what the Church is all about: getting the word out, spreading the gospel and doing good. It doesn't guarantee that life is going to be easy, but you only pass through life once, and I think there's a certain expectation on all of us to do positive things for others in any way possible."

Inside:

- Plan Today for Possibilities Tomorrow
- Your Will—Your Way



Plan Today for Possibilities Tomorrow

Life can be complicated, and once you feel you have it sorted out it's apt to change. When you have so many complications in life, it's nice to find something that can be straightforward. For instance, estate planning doesn't need to be complex. Just take it step-by-step so you have a plan ready to provide for those important to you.

Make a difference

Your estate plans should reflect your ongoing desires for your heirs and for the distribution of your property. Each of us makes a difference in the lives of those around us, especially the individuals we care about most. And although we might not like to think about it, we all need to consider what would change for the people who depend on us if we weren't there. What would our spouse, children,

grandchildren, parents, siblings or close friends be left with in our absence?

An effective estate plan often revolves around a will. A will is important regardless of your wealth, marital status or age. Having a will ensures that what you have goes to those you care about most.

In the process of making a will and other estate plans, many people find that including provisions for charity is a meaningful experience. Charitable giving does not have to compete with providing for loved ones. There are many ways to include favorite charities, like the Diocese of Fairbanks, in your plans after the needs of your family and friends are covered.

As you contemplate any events or changes that have occurred in your life recently, think of any new

possibilities they may have provided. With the recent tax law changes, many individuals do not expect to owe estate taxes, so they are able to provide more for loved ones and their philanthropic interests.

Others are realizing that it may be wise to make their charitable gifts from retirement funds and leave other non-taxable assets to loved ones. (Read more on the special provision for funding charitable gifts directly from an individual retirement account (IRA) below.)

If you don't have a will or estate plan in place, or, due to changes in your life, your plans need to be updated—don't delay. Read on for more information about the importance of planning, not just for you, but for those you care about. Please return the enclosed card or contact us if you would like more information.



In February, Bishop Chad Zielinski presented Pope Francis with a letter opener carved from a woolly mammoth tooth by Alaskan artist, Chuck Leake. Deacon Chuck Bowman, from Sacred Heart Cathedral in Fairbanks, made the handcrafted wooden box.

Giving Through Your IRA

If you are age 70½ or older, you can make charitable gifts directly from individual retirement accounts (IRAs) using funds that might otherwise be taxed when withdrawn (up to a total of \$100,000 per individual per year).

Because most funds withdrawn from IRAs are considered income, your total taxable income is increased, pushing you into a higher tax bracket. Distributions directly to charity from your IRA will not, however, be included in your taxable income whether or not you normally itemize your charitable gifts and other deductible expenses. Such gifts can also count toward all or part of your annual required minimum distribution (which, as a result of the SECURE Act, now begins at age 72 for those turning 70½ in 2020 or later).

Your Will— Your Way

When it comes to writing your will, you can choose how—and to whom—you want your assets distributed after you are gone. The will is an extremely flexible instrument and there are several ways that you can designate your loved ones and charities, like the Diocese of Fairbanks, to receive bequests.

Give “what’s left.” The residue of your estate is what remains after all other distributions have been made. After first providing for loved ones, you can devote all or a portion of the residue of your estate to the charity of your choice.

Give adjustable amounts. Leaving designated percentages of your estate allows you to give proportions rather than specific amounts. The amounts received are then automatically adjusted as the value of your estate changes.

Leave a fixed amount. Your will can specify a dollar amount to be given. This option can make sense if you would like to ensure that a certain amount is received before leaving any remaining assets to others. Remember, however, that your financial situation may change over time. It is important to review your will and other plans from time to time.

Wills offer flexibility. You can also combine the above methods in your will. For example, you might specify that certain amounts or properties go to certain people, then divide the remainder by percentages among charities close to your heart, such as the Diocese of Fairbanks.

We will be happy to provide more information about including charitable gifts as part of your overall plans. Please contact us or your advisors for your assistance.

Seminarian Endowment Update:

The Diocese continues its efforts to shore up our Seminarian Endowment Fund. Thanks to your generous help, the Fund has now reached over \$1.3 million!

In the next *Alaskan Shepherd*, we will spotlight Nick Shamrell, currently in formation at Mount Angel Seminary in Saint Benedict, Oregon. Please keep Nick, Dominik Wojcik, Piotr Oprych and Josh Miller in your prayers.

Be on the lookout for this year’s Seminarian Endowment Appeal Letter from Bishop Chad Zielinski, who writes: “I daily entrust all our priests, religious, seminarians and the entire faithful of the diocese to the Blessed Virgin Mary, who with her maternal love and protection, draws us closer to her Son.”

If you would like to donate to the Seminarian Endowment Fund this year or set up a recurring donation, please call Lin Craig in our Diocesan Donation Office at 907-374-9532 or make your gift online at <http://bit.ly/SemEndow20>.

TO DONATE DIRECTLY
TO THE SEMINARIAN
ENDOWMENT FUND



Josh Miller



Piotr Oprych



Nick Shamrell



Dominik Wojcik



Considering a Bequest?

If you are considering making a gift to the Diocese of Fairbanks through your will or trust, we sincerely thank you. These gifts make a profound difference in our ministries. Here is some language you may want to share with your attorney:

“I give the sum of \$_____ to the Catholic Bishop of Northern Alaska, 1312 Peger Road, Fairbanks, Alaska 99709”; or “I leave all (or a portion) of the rest, residue and remainder of my property of every kind and character, including personal property and real estate and wheresoever the same may be situated, I give and devise to the Catholic Bishop of Northern Alaska, 1312 Peger Road, Fairbanks, Alaska 99709.”

Are You Up to Date?

The goal of estate planning is to outline your wishes about your property and how you would like to distribute it in the future. Are you certain that your plans are up to date? Take this quiz to find out.

1. Do you have a will or living trust to direct the distribution of your property? **Y** **N**
2. Is the makeup of your family the same as when you last reviewed your plans? **Y** **N**
3. Do you live in the same state as when you last updated your will and/or other plans? **Y** **N**
4. Has the value of your assets remained the same since you last reviewed your plans? **Y** **N**
5. Are all the people and charities important to you mentioned in your plans? **Y** **N**
6. Have you given appropriate powers of attorney to someone you trust to allow them to act for you, should it become necessary? **Y** **N**
7. Is the person you have named to settle your affairs still able and willing to serve? **Y** **N**
8. Are your insurance and/or retirement plan beneficiary designations up to date? **Y** **N**
9. Have you made provisions for what will happen to your digital assets? (e.g., photos, emails, music or e-books stored electronically) **Y** **N**
10. Have you discussed your estate plans with your loved ones? **Y** **N**

Your score

If you answered NO to one or more of these questions, you may need to review your long-range plans. Your professional advisors can offer advice and help with any updates you might need.



More information

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