**GuideStar Enrollment**

This is an updated repeat of information provided in September, 2013. If your parish or school has not already done so, we strongly recommend registering with GuideStar.

Many of you have experienced the problem of having a matching gift or grant decline merely because your organization is not listed in an electronic database of exempt organizations. In the old days, a paper copy of the IRS determination letter and copies of the appropriate pages from the Official Catholic Directory were all that you needed. We have been trapped with paper in an electronic world.

This is also problematic if you try to utilize services designed for non-profit entities offered by on-line providers. To enroll in these programs you must complete an on-line application, but the application stalls when it can’t find the federal ID number in the database.

Here is the good news!

GuideStar provides the opportunity – free of charge – for those entities listed in the Kenedy Directory (Official Catholic Directory) to be listed in the necessary on-line database. GuideStar is a 501(c)(3) public charity that collects, organizes, and presents information on non-profits to a broad audience. This service is widely used by granting organizations and on-line providers and gives them the ability to verify your organization’s charitable 501(c)(3) status.

The process is quite easy and a number of parishes and schools have successfully entered into this database. If you wish to have your organization listed on this database, you will need to complete GuideStar’s short process.

You will need the following items to send to GuideStar:

* A copy of a federal document that shows your organization name, address and federal ID number. If you are not able to find one, contact the IRS at 800-829-4933 and request a verification letter; it will come in the mail 7-10 days later, or you may request it be faxed.
* A copy of your organization’s listing in the Kenedy Directory (OCD). Contact Faye Herrick in the Chancery if you need a copy (herrickf@archmil.org or 414-769-3339).
* The year your organization was established. (Check your original articles of incorporation)

Below is the link to the GuideStar directions. This is a 5 page document, please use the first section for Faith Based Organizations, and the Agencies Under a Group Exemption information at the bottom of the 3rd and top of the 4th pages. Follow the directions for item 1, 2 and 5a and b.

<http://documents.yourcause.com/att/GUIDESTAR-POLICY-For-Adding-Organizations.pdf>

Fax or email these items directly to GuideStar. (Do one or the other, NOT both.) If you email, you will receive a confirmation of receipt email back from them. Be sure to include your contact information – phone and email – so they may contact you with any questions. It will take 5-7 business days for the process to complete.

Sample email to GuideStar:

Good morning,

We would like to add St. Elsewhere Congregation in Milwaukee, Wisconsin to the GuideStar database.

Pursuant to your *Policy for Adding Organizations not Listed on the IRS Business Master File*, attached to this email are:

* EIN verification letter from the IRS
* Cover page and page xxx from the 20xx Kenedy Directory

St. Elsewhere Congregation was established in 1923.

Should you require a copy of the most recent group ruling letter, it is found at this link: <http://www.usccb.org/about/general-counsel/tax-and-group-ruling.cfm>

Please let me know if you require any additional information. I may be reached by phone at 414-123-4567 or via email scooper@stelsewhere.org.

Thank you for your efforts!

Sheldon Cooper

Business Manager

St. Elsewhere Congregation

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