

4. A signature stamp should **never** be used. In fact, it is strongly recommended that signature stamps be destroyed. In this way, all cash outflow is properly reviewed and authorized.
5. All bank statements and cancelled checks should be received directly by the pastor/administrator. This person should open and review to ensure
  - a. Payees are valid and signatures are authentic,
  - b. Endorsements, if available, appear genuine,
  - c. All other transactions have been authorized, and
  - d. The balance appears reasonable.
6. Bank reconciliations should be performed on a timely basis, preferably within ten days of receipt of the bank statement by a member of the Finance Council or a knowledgeable parishioner. This helps to ensure that any errors can be found and corrected promptly by either the bank or the parish. A member of the Parish Finance Council or the pastor/administrator should review the reconciliations on a monthly basis, dating them and signing off (see [Appendix C. Accounting – Sample – Bank Statement Review](#)).

During the reconciliation process, any irregularities, such as a check made out to cash or to the person signing it, should be reported and investigated.

7. Any and all checking, savings, and investment accounts should be included on the parish/school general ledger (see [Accounting – Recording Financial Information from Auxiliary/Affiliated Organizations](#)). This helps ensure that the Statement of Financial Position (Balance Sheet) includes all financial assets and allows the Parish Finance Council and the diocese to have a complete picture of the finances of the parish/school.

## **E. Cash Receipts – Weekly Collections**

The underlying principles to be followed in processing the weekly collections are separation of duties and physical control over the cash. The following are guidelines are preferred, *but not always practical*, to achieve these goals:

1. **Ushers**
  - a. Immediately following the collection, the monies should be secured. Use of pre-numbered plastic security/tamper-proof bags is strongly recommended. These security bags should be used in the Church immediately by the ushers once the collection has been made and **before the monies are taken to the Altar**. Please note that although this is the preferred procedure, it is understood that it may not be practical. Therefore, placement of the funds in the security bag immediately following Mass will fulfill this requirement. The security bags should be signed and dated. The bags should remain sealed until opened in the presence of two or more people who count the funds. In the event the parish is depositing funds straight into the lockbox for counting, the bag(s) should not be opened before depositing in the lockbox. A log of the bags used is to be maintained.
  - b. It is customary to bring the collection to the altar during the Procession with the Gifts. They should be “put in a suitable place away from the Eucharistic table” (GIRM 74).

After the Mass, the collection should be transferred by the ushers to a secure place (i.e. safe, locked cabinet, bank lock-box).

## 2. Counters

- a. A committee of several people, divided into teams, should be established to count the weekend collection. We encourage that individual count teams consist of unrelated parties (Close relatives or husband and wife teams should not be allowed).
- b. Under no circumstance, should you have only one individual count and deposit the collections. Nor should the bookkeeper or the pastor perform the count and/or make the deposit.
- c. The members of the team should be rotated every week or at other appropriate intervals. They should be responsible for counting the money, completing the deposit summary report, preparing the deposit slip, and taking the monies to the bank.

## 3. Counting Process

- a. All monies collected must be deposited intact. No cash should ever be taken or exchanged from the collections or cash received in the office.
- b. The back of each check should be immediately endorsed with the parish stamp, which should have the parish name and bank account number and say “For Deposit Only”.
- c. The deposit summary will designate all money. In order to complete the report, the envelopes will need to be sorted by type (e.g. weekly envelopes, building fund, and diocesan collections) and a calculator tape must be attached to the group of envelopes. These totals must be transferred to the deposit summary report.
- d. The deposit summary must be accurately filled out, and members of the team must sign and date the report. The deposit summary should agree to the deposit slip.
- e. The deposit slip can list each check by parishioner, or the checks must be included with the deposit summary report. A duplicate deposit slip must be attached to the deposit summary. The validated deposit slip from the bank must also be attached to the deposit summary.
- f. Envelopes should be reconciled to the individual parishioner’s account (on ParishSOFT). The totals of the posting to the parishioners’ accounts should tie to total of the envelopes and the deposit summary.
- g. We ask you to encourage the use of checks, automatic account withdrawals, and envelopes, as a basis for greater internal controls.
- h. [Appendix C. Accounting – Sample – Counting Sheet](#) is available as a resource to help aid in accuracy of reporting and data transference from counters to the bookkeeper.

## 4. Making the deposit

- a. The deposit is to be made preferably on Sunday. The funds should be deposited in the bank’s night drop box. If this is not possible, the security bag(s) containing the funds should be placed in the safe overnight for deposit on Monday morning.
- b. The bookkeeper should reconcile the deposit slips, the deposit summary report, and the posting to the individual parishioners’ accounts.

## 5. **General Controls**

- a. Church money should never be taken home by anyone.
- b. Collection records should be compared from week to week and against the same week of the previous year.
- c. All regular money handlers must undergo a background screen before they are allowed to count the collection. In requiring a background screen of all prospective money handlers, no one individual will be embarrassed by being singled out for special scrutiny.
- d. Insist that all individuals involved in the cash receipts, recording, and accounting functions take some hiatus from these duties.

## **F. Cash Receipts – Other**

1. Processing of cash receipts (opening mail, preparing the deposit, making the deposit) should be done by an individual (two together if possible) who does not enter the information in the accounting records.
2. Written, two-part receipts (carbon and original) should be given for all cash received through the parish/school office. A receipt book should be purchased with numerical sequencing.
3. All checks should be restrictively endorsed “for deposit only” with the parish name and account number as soon as they are received. This ensures that any lost or stolen checks cannot be cashed or deposited to any other account.
4. Donations should be recorded in the proper year. The postmark date on the mailing envelope should be used to record the date received at year-end. Checks received after December 31 and postmarked later than year-end should be recorded in the following year. Checks received through the offertory collection baskets should be recorded on the date received as opposed to the date of the check.
5. If receipts are processed in batches, the batch total should match the deposit total and the total of the receipts in the receipt book. This is another way to verify the accuracy of the information being entered in the general ledger.
6. All receipts/payments should be recorded in the general ledger.
7. Deposits should be made on a daily basis or as soon as feasible. If cash/checks are received and not deposited to the bank the day they are received, they should be kept in a locked, fireproof location. No cash or checks should be retained in the office for longer than five days, so as to safeguard the asset from theft or loss.

## **G. Cash Receipts – Tuition**

1. Tuition payments and other fees should be restrictively endorsed when received and listed on a school deposit summary sheet (by student or family name) that balances with the bank deposit. If the deposit is not made the day it is received, it should be locked in a fireproof location.
2. All tuition and fee revenue should be deposited into the main school operating account.