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# EWTN

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## EWTN FAMILY MEMBERS SHARE THEIR STORIES

# Shirley Johnson Testimonial

by Karen Silva



**Shirley Johnson** lived a full Catholic life and loved to continuously learn about her Catholic faith.

Some of her favorite programs were Father Mitch Pacwa's Scripture & Tradition and *EWTN Live*.

When setting up her estate plan, Shirley wanted to support the Network that meant so much to her during her lifetime.

Shirley Ann Johnson was born on September 17, 1936. Shirley's life was one of service and spending her life for others. Shirley was a Holy Cross Sister for 18 years and taught at Santa Cruz Catholic School and San Xavier Mission School. She then discerned that God wanted her to leave the convent and help her sister, Ruth. During this time, Shirley tutored children in various subjects, which she continued until the last nine months of her earthly life.

Shirley made several pilgrimages to EWTN throughout her life. One time, their bus broke down on the way back to Tucson from a Family Celebration in Birmingham. They had to wait several hours for a replacement bus, but the time went quickly as they all shared their experiences and memories from the

trip, which made the delay much easier to deal with. When she was no longer able to attend daily Mass in person, she loved to watch the Mass broadcast from Irondale. She felt more present during the televised Mass because she had visited the chapel in Irondale a number of times.

After recovering from heart surgery, Shirley decided to make a pilgrimage to the Holy Land. She said she felt blessed to be able to experience breathing the air that Jesus and Mary breathed and walking in their footsteps. One of the highlights from her pilgrimage was the Way of the Cross; however, it was especially difficult for her as her chest still hurt from the surgery. She thought about how exhausted Jesus must have been making His way to Golgotha and how He struggled. She thought, "If He could do it, so must I." Shirley learned a lot about her Catholic Faith from EWTN.

Watching Father Mitch's Holy Land Rosary especially made her pilgrimage that much richer.

Through it all, EWTN was there for her. In the hospital and at home, before, during and after COVID, when all our Churches were shuttered, EWTN was there keeping the Faith!


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# Shirley Johnson Testimonial (continued from page 1)

A longtime supporter of the network, Shirley wanted to establish a Legacy Gift for EWTN.

Through her will, Shirley divided the proceeds from her home between three charities including EWTN. She also named EWTN as a beneficiary of her IRAs. After visiting her, Ryan Flood said, "Shirley gives us a great lesson in detachment from the material goods

of this world...so we can keep our eyes better fixed on Jesus." The value of her home and retirement accounts make a meaningful difference to each charity. EWTN will have more resources to evangelize and help others live an integrated Catholic life because of her estate gifts.

May Shirley's soul and all the souls of the faithful departed Rest in Peace. Amen. 

*To learn more about including Catholic Provisions or charitable gifts in your estate plans, please contact the Legacy Giving Program to schedule a no-cost, no-obligation phone call with one of our Gift Planners.*

*Inspire others by sharing your story with our EWTN Family at (205) 271-4522 or [legacygiving@ewtn.com](mailto:legacygiving@ewtn.com). For more stories, visit [www.ewtnlegacy.org](http://www.ewtnlegacy.org).*

## The Charitable Gift Annuity



**Shirley Macaron**

The charitable gift annuity (CGA) is a gift that supports the evangelization of EWTN and provides you, or you and another person, with lifetime income. To create

a CGA, transfer an asset or cash to charity. In turn, the charity agrees to make partially tax-free payments to you for life. At the end of your life, the remaining annuity supports EWTN. The CGA rate is based on your age. Contact us for your personal rate and gift illustration.

**"When I saw it, I grabbed it!"** Shirley was excited to learn EWTN offers Charitable Gift Annuities. Shirley has established several CGAs over the years. She likes the tax deduction and good interest rate based on her age. She can make generous gifts to charity with the security from fixed income for life.

*Charitable Gift Annuities have been an effective giving strategy for Shirley. If you want to learn more and determine if a Charitable Gift Annuity could be right for you, please contact the Legacy Giving Program to schedule a no-cost, no-obligation phone call with one of our Gift Planners at (205) 271-4522 or [legacygiving@ewtn.com](mailto:legacygiving@ewtn.com)*



## EWTN Welcomes New Legacy Giving Officer, Daniel F. Clark, J.D.

The Legacy Giving Program is happy to welcome Dan Clark as its newest team member. Dan has nearly 30 years of experience helping individuals and families with philanthropic and estate planning. He is available to assist EWTN Family members in the Mid-Atlantic and Northeast U.S. region with creating a plan that achieves their charitable and estate planning goals.

You can reach Dan at (205) 917-7214.

# Choosing the Best Executor for your Will

## Part 2 of 2

by Cimarron "Cim" Gilson, Esq.



*In our Fall/Winter 2023 Edition Cim described the terminology and process of choosing an executor.*

What happens once a probate attorney

recommends the probating of your will? The attorney and executor work together to file an application to begin the probate process in court. There, the judge determines the validity of your will. This is because some wills are fraudulently made or coerced or made by someone without the mental capacity to make a will. If your will is determined valid, then the judge officially appoints the person named in your will as the executor of your will and provides him or her with Letters Testamentary (pronounced tes-tuh-men-tuh-ree). With these letters in hand, your executor can begin the work of fulfilling the wishes and desires expressed in your will.


The court imposes some duties on your executor, such as **1)** gathering and securing all probate assets, that is, assets involved in the probate process and not assets that transferred by right of survivorship or beneficiary designation, **2)** filing with the court a written inventory and valuation of these assets, **3)** notifying in writing the beneficiaries of the will and creditors of your estate, **4)** preparing final individual and estate tax returns (hopefully, with the help of a CPA), **5)** operating or winding down any business left behind, **6)** assisting the named guardians of your minor children with applying for legal guardianship and setting up any trusts for their inheritance, **7)** finding an estate sale company to sell your household goods and a realtor to sell your

real estate, **8)** selling your cars, **9)** setting aside money or assets for the care of your surviving spouse or dependents, if allowed by your state's laws, **10)** any other special tasks you included in your will, and finally and lastly, **11)** distributing the "residue" to the will beneficiaries. That sounds like a lot to do, and often it is, so choosing which child, parent, friend, or professional will serve as your executor is very important.

Who should you pick to serve as executor of your will? First, don't feel compelled to pick the eldest child simply because he or she is the eldest. Don't feel you must pick a relative if you know you wouldn't trust him or her to access your checkbook or personal documents. Also don't name multiple children simply because you don't want one of them to have hurt feelings or feel left out. These are just a few of the many emotional reasons that might motivate your executor choice, but these reasons may not yield the best suited person(s) to handle all the duties described in the previous paragraphs. While you might consider naming co-executors, it is my general preference to work with one executor rather than several. Here are some additional considerations that matter in choosing a good executor:

- Level of organizational, communication, interpersonal, and financial management skills
- Proximity to your probate assets and the court
- Time available to see the process through
- Criminal background (most states disqualify felons from serving)
- Age (will they be alive when you pass?)
- Maturity level and honesty
- Shared religious values

Being an executor is a fiduciary role, meaning one with legal obligations to those he or she is serving on behalf of, i.e., the beneficiaries. With duty comes liability. If a fiduciary fails to serve faithfully or breaches a legal duty, such as not acting in good faith or engaging in self-dealing, the executor may be replaced. The seriousness of this role may lead you to pick a charity's development office, one of your professional advisors, or a local bank or trust department to serve, since they often have the skill set, legal knowledge, and liability insurance, which altogether can ensure that the administration of your will and probate estate is carried out faithfully and competently. These types of executors charge fees for their services, but the cost is often worth the peace of mind and competency they provide.

As you can see from this discussion, great thought must go into who you pick as executor of your will. While you probably thought it, the same considerations should go into choosing your power of attorney, trustee, or guardian of your children or disabled dependents. But don't let the gravity of this decision keep you from moving forward with getting your affairs in order. Getting your will or other estate planning documents done is one of the biggest favors you can do for those you leave behind. Armed with the knowledge you have gained from this article, you should be empowered to pick the best executor for your will, and you will certainly have peace knowing you have planned ahead for your loved ones and left someone in charge who is well suited to carry out your final wishes. 

*Cim Gilson, Esq. is an Estate Planning Attorney from San Antonio, Texas*



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2024

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## Meet EWTN's Legacy Giving Staff

**Ryan Flood, Karen Silva, Daniel Clark,  
Charlie Van Patten, Khayla Jones, and  
Kate Sydnor**



**Ryan T. Flood,  
CAP®, FCEP**

Director, Legacy  
Giving Program



**Karen Silva,  
CFRE, FCEP**

Legacy Giving Officer  
overseeing the MidSouth/  
Southwest regions



**Daniel Clark, J.D.**

Legacy Giving Officer  
overseeing the  
Mid-Atlantic and  
NorthEast regions



**Charlie Van Patten,  
J.D., CAP®**

Legacy Giving Officer  
overseeing the  
SouthEast region



**Khayla Jones**

Legacy  
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**Kate Sydnor**

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