

TRIP – Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

TRIP can seem confusing when you first look at the program, but it really is easy once you start using it. It can save you money off of your child's tuition costs. Below is a list of some of the most asked questions. If there are still questions after reading, please do not hesitate to call the TRIP Coordinator @ 345-9874, ext. 200.

What does TRIP stand for?

Tuition Reduction Incentive Program

What do I have to do?

Buy gift certificates to stores that you would spend money at anyway. The vendors listed include grocery stores, department stores, gas stations, specialty shops, and many fast food and other restaurants.

How does this save me money?

The Church buys these certificates at a discount, and saves the discounted amount and gives it back to you at the end of the TRIP year as a credit towards your child's next year school tuition.

Does the Church administrate this program?

Yes, St. Francis de Sales Church offers this program to parents of school children at St. Francis, Blessed Sacrament, and Newark Catholic schools. St. Francis keeps 1.5% of all the discounts in order to pay for administration costs, supplies, etc.

When do I order?

Orders are dropped off at St. Francis mail slot or at the Parish Office or School Office anytime before 9am Friday morning. The orders are ready for pick-up the following Thurs. evening, Friday morning or Sunday morning.

When do I pay?

All orders must be accompanied by a check, money order or cash for the entire amount. No postdated checks are accepted.

What if I can't make it to the Pick-up times? Can someone else pick them up for me?

Yes, on your Enrollment form you can designate up to four other people besides yourself and your spouse who can pick up the orders. These people must be at least 18 years of age.

Can family members or friends order also?

Yes, they can enroll themselves, designating your children as the recipient of the tuition credits or they can order putting your name at the top of the order form and write their own checks. (Remember, only those authorized can pick up your orders, even if a friend writes a check for the order.)

Where are order forms?

They are in the school office of St. Francis, Blessed Sacrament and Newark Catholic. They are also found in the St. Francis Parish Office and online at stfrancisparish.net.

Can I e-mail you my order?

No, all orders must be accompanied by payment.

Can I use the gift certificates to pay on my charge accounts like Elder Beerman and JCPenney's?

Each vendor is different in what they allow. Some do and some don't. Please contact the vendor themselves.

Do I have to order every week?

No, many of our TRIP users order once a month or once a year. But you won't accumulate credits if you don't order, so the people who save the most are the people who order the most.

What is the TRIP year?

The year starts March 1 and continues until the next year end of February.

Does TRIP continue throughout the summer?

Yes

Does TRIP stop over Christmas Break or Spring Break?

Usually TRIP takes a one or two week break after Christmas and one week in April. This is not set by the church, but by the distributor that we order most of our certificates from.

Who is this distributor?

We order most of our certificates from Great Lakes Scrip Company in Michigan. They work with over 10,000 non-profit organizations.

I've heard that Great Lakes has a website with a lot of vendors? Can I order from them directly or order vendors that are not on our order form?

Sorry. They will not sell anything to individuals, only to organizations.

Who sets the percentage of discount?

Each vendor chooses their own discount amount. They can (and do!) vary this amount for special sales different times of the year.

What happens if my order is not correct?

We ask that you check your order carefully before you leave the TRIP pick-up room. We are not responsible if anything is missing once you leave. If something is in error, please tell the Pick-up volunteer and they will take down the information. Usually the problem is corrected by the next Pick up week.

Do you order certificates from local vendors?

Yes, we order locally from Elder Beerman, Carnival Foods, Kroger, East of Chicago, Fazoli's, Ross' Granville Market, Go Kleen, Jersey Mike's Subs, Natoma, Wilson's Garden Center, Land's End, Applebee's, Texas Roadhouse, Lil' Bear, Ace Carpet Care, Educational Apparel (school uniforms), Kohl's, Duke and Duchess, Adornetto's, Buffalo Wild Wings, Dairy Queen, & Graeter's,

What is a back order? What causes a back order?

A back order from a Great Lakes vendor usually means that they are temporarily out. They are never out for long. We usually get these to you in a couple of weeks.

A Back order from one of the local vendors usually means that we have had to order a bulk order from them in order to receive a discount. If there are not enough orders for that vendor to equal the bulk order, we may wait a week. If this is done, we automatically order that vendor by the 2nd week.

What about Target and Wal-Mart?

These vendors give money back to the community in other ways and do not participate in local gift certificate programs

What about Meijers?

Meijers has a special program called Community Rewards. You can sign up for a scan card and receive rebates to your TRIP account. These rebates don't kick in until you have purchased over \$100 in one month. See the Pick up volunteers or the Coordinator for an application.

I've heard that Kroger's has a new gift card that is reloadable at the store? What is this?

You can purchase your initial cards through the TRIP program and then reload the cards at Kroger. The reloads are sent back to the Coordinator once a month and records are kept for the whole year. At the end of the TRIP year, the Coordinator will total all your reloads and give 3.5% of that back as a tuition credit.

What happens if my card doesn't work at the Kroger store?

Any gift card that is swiped is subject to becoming demagnetized. When that happens the card has to be manually entered into the cash register. You can contact the TRIP Coordinator for a new card if this becomes troublesome.

When does the credit show on my tuition account?

The secretaries of each school send out an invoice for the next school year in the spring of the year. The TRIP credits are clearly marked and then subtracted from the tuition total.

Why do the order forms have to constantly revised?

Vendors changes their percentages and denominations of gift cards/gift certificates all the time. New Vendors are added on and others drop off the program. The Coordinator will revise the order form once every 2 weeks. The revision date is marked clearly at the top of the order form. If it has been awhile since you have ordered, it is a good idea to stop at a Pick Up and get a new order form, or go online.