

During these difficult and challenging times, the Office of Mission Advancement deeply appreciates the challenges pastors and parish leaders are facing on a daily basis. In an effort to provide continuing support and guidance, please know that our office stands ready to assist you in any capacity you may wish. Recognizing that our parishes are already doing great work attending to the spiritual and physical needs of parishioners, please find below some practical tips and strategies offered in the spirit of support and encouragement of your efforts.

Suggested Practical Strategies to engage and invite continued giving to the parish through the COVID-19 pandemic:

- **Increase levels of communication**
- **Increase Virtual Presence**
- **Be Positive, offer Hope**
- **Continue the work of charity**
- **In addition to daily Mass, perhaps increase Devotional Prayer: Rosary, Divine Mercy Chaplet, Novenas, 40 Day Consecration to Mary, etc.**
- **Thank people for their commitment of faith to the parish, their involvement and membership and their support of prayer and financial giving**
- **Inform and guide parishioners how they can continue their critical financial support**

Communication/Engagement Opportunities:

1. *Provide diocesan, parish and community updates.*
2. *Send a daily/ weekly note of encouragement, love, hope, etc. via email to parishioners; post on website. Ask for prayer intentions.*
3. *Make Phone calls: set aside an hour a day and make 10-20 calls to parishioners checking in, know you are praying and offer hope and comfort.*
4. *Offer a daily/weekly live stream a short or 1 hour prayer gathering via parish website or Facebook-go live and have a discussion; live prayer opportunities.*
5. *Conduct a daily "Check-in from your Pastor." Video record or live-stream.*
6. *Write hand-written notes to key staff, volunteers, parish leaders, major donors, those who are struggling, etc. Think of this time as a blessed time or opportunity to start, continue or increase correspondence. People want/need to feel connected to their church and parish, especially when they can't physically be there.*
7. *Promote volunteer-from-home opportunities.*
8. *Share Catholic podcasts and other resources.*
9. *Share your common humanity. Through video streaming, share what you are doing with your time. Show yourself praying, walking the dog, cleaning the gutters, turning the earth in prep for your garden, calling family, friends, parishioners, etc. Making yourself "accessible" this way. This is a type of engagement folks truly appreciate and helps them feel connected and that you are "with them."*
10. *Provide on-line resources for folks—great catholic, spiritual websites. Everything from virtual tours of great cathedrals around the world, to live streaming Masses from monasteries, to beautiful Gregorian chant by religious sisters, etc. Offer links to FORMED video series, Word On Fire sites.*
11. *Share the free Magnificat <https://us.magnificat.net/free>*
12. *Provide Stewardship based bulletin items on your website.*

13. Find ways your parish can become a virtual host: Perhaps host a virtual holy movie night through the parish. (*FATIMA, The Two Popes, The Scarlet and the Black, The Mission, etc.*). Host virtual bible studies, prayer chains, etc.

Financial Giving Strategies:

1. Think digital and on-line. This is the best vehicle in this crisis for people to give.
2. Inform and direct folks to your online giving page on your parish website. Enhance/create on-line capabilities through parish website. Contact your current provider or some potential providers listed here to assist you :
 - a. Faith Direct
 - b. Our Sunday Visitor
 - c. WeShare
 - d. Vanco
3. Inform parishioners that they mail their regular Sunday Offertory directly to the parish.
4. Continue to Thank major-donors and current donors to your parish, and to the ACA. Note cards, phone calls, emails, Flock Note posts, Constant Contact emails, etc. are excellent ways to demonstrate your appreciation and cultivate continued/increased giving.
5. Reaffirm your mission and impact. Share stories of how the parish has/is serving the needs of others. Use personal stories, examples.
6. Don't be afraid to ask for financial support/continuing support during this time. Don't be afraid of No. If parishioners cannot give due to circumstances, it is certainly okay. Many parishioners may still have the intent and ability to financially give to the mission and ministry of the parish; most people respond to personal asks and appreciate them.

Annual Catholic Appeal (ACA) Update:

1. At this time, the ACA will continue to follow the timeline and schedule established and sent out in ACA parish packets. This means:
 - a. Processing of gifts and pledges will continue
 - b. Providing parish update reports will continue
 - c. Thank you letters to donors will continue
 - d. The 2nd solicitation mailing will go out to past donors who have not yet given as scheduled, which is May 4th.
 - e. Pledge reminders will continue for those who have made a pledge.
 - f. You will be notified immediately if the timeline or process of the ACA changes due to necessity.

Thank you for your leadership, faith and care of our faith communities. Know that our office can be reached at any time to assist you further. Be assured of our prayers and support.

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