

Need Help? Contact David Kissell in the Stewardship Department at (513) 578-9212 or email [dkissell@catholiccincinnati.org](mailto:dkissell@catholiccincinnati.org)

## STEWARDSHIP & FINANCIAL GIVING

### Considerations Before Making a Financial Appeal to Parishioners

- 1) **Regular Communication First:** A financial appeal should not be the first communication parishioners hear from their parish. As much as possible, emails, letters, phone calls, etc. with updates from the parish should be occurring on a regular basis.
- 2) **Current Ministries and Helping with the Crisis:** Take an inventory of all the areas of parish life that are continuing, even if modified for the time being (e.g. live stream Mass) AND the ways the parish is helping with the crisis (e.g. food pantry). Use this information in regular updates to the parish.
- 3) **Financial Assessment:** With the help of the Finance Council, assess your situation. Some areas to look at:
  - a. Cash flow analysis for the next 3 to 6 months
  - b. Prioritize potential cuts in the budget
  - c. Identify potential savings because things are not happening any longer
  - d. Identify given costs, such as utilities, staff salaries/benefits, etc.
  - e. Parish savings/reserve funds – how long will savings help to cover current costs
- 4) **Phone Outreach:** Pull a team of staff and/or volunteers together to call as many parish families as possible. Example: 10 team members making 10 calls per day would have made 1,000 calls in 10 days.

Main items to cover when calling:

  - Check in on how families are doing
  - Share parish updates / Ask for their email address to receive parish updates
  - Ask if the family has any prayer intentions
- 5) **Online Giving:** If you don't already have online giving, set it up now. If you have online giving, make the link or giving button very prominent on the parish homepage. Numerous options and vendors are out there for online giving.

For a sample listing of the vendors, visit: [www.aocstewardship.org/resources](http://www.aocstewardship.org/resources)

## Appeal Letter and/or Email – Outline of Main Points

### 1) **Acknowledge the Situation**

- Introduction paragraph to acknowledge the situation, words of encouragement and hope, Scripture reference, etc.
- Offer prayers and encourage families to reach out if they need anything

### 2) **Current Ministry and Ways Parish is Helping with the Crisis**

- Outline current ministries that are continuing, specifics on what the parish is doing to meet the needs of the situation, new ways of ministering to parishioners, helping with community outreach, etc.

### 3) **Financial Assessment & Impact**

- Provide an update on how the parish is being impacted financially and what measures are being taken to address the situation
- When communicating financial impact, be transparent and honest, but try to avoid guilt inducing statements or threats of what might happen if people don't contribute.
  - *Example of what to avoid:*  
"If financial contributions don't continue, we will have to cut..."
  - *Alternative way to state this reality:*  
"Just as many families are dealing with, we too are faced with difficult financial decisions. We hope that continued financial support will sustain as much of our parish life as possible."

### 4) **Invitation for Continued Support**

- Invite continued financial support and provide ways to do so
  - Consider inviting gifts of prayer, ministry/involvement, and financial (see sample letter below)

## Sample Appeal Letter and/or Email

Dear NAME,

We find ourselves in an unbelievably challenging time as the entire world faces the Covid-19 pandemic. So much anxiety, uncertainty, fear, confusion...the list can go on and on. Through all this, we continue to trust in God's love and presence, believing that He will never abandon us, even in our darkest hour.

I recognize that this pandemic will affect every family in our parish community, some more deeply than others. First and foremost, please know that you and your family remain in my daily prayers and especially in my daily offering of the Mass. If there is anything that I and/or the parish can do to help minister to you or your family at this time, please do not hesitate to contact us at INSERT CONTACT INFO HERE.

### **Our Parish is Responding and Making a Difference**

Here at St. Name Parish, we are working to continue meeting the spiritual and physical needs of our parishioners and the local community. Our main focus is on the following:

- **Live Streaming Mass** and prayer opportunities (Adoration, Stations of the Cross, Rosary) on our parish website at: INSERT WEBSITE LINK HERE
- **Offering Confession** by appointment, multiple days per week
- **Phone Outreach** – our parish staff and a team of volunteers are calling to check in on as many families as possible, especially our homebound parishioners
- **Supporting our faculty, staff, and catechists** as they move to online education of students in our school and parishioner religious education programs
- **Partnering with local ministries**, such as St. Vincent de Paul and our local food pantry, to help meet the needs of people in very vulnerable situations right now and the growing number that we foresee in the future

### **Financial Assessment & Impact of the Crisis**

To be in a position to effectively operate now and after the crisis, our parish finance council is working to ensure we remain financially viable. Some key items to point out here:

- Potential spending cuts/saving opportunities have been identified and prioritized (e.g. planned summer painting projects will be put on hold). These cuts will be implemented as needed, depending on how long the crisis lasts.  
*(Note here: give examples of cuts and/or savings if known)*
- Based on current giving levels (families sending in contributions and online giving), we need to pull from our parish savings to cover essential expenses such as staff salaries. If necessary, our parish savings could sustain our essential expenses for approximately 6 months – we are hoping and praying for the best, but preparing for what may come.

### **An Invitation for Your Continued Support**

As we work to meet the challenges of today and look ahead with great hope for the day when normal parish life can resume, I invite you to prayerfully consider:

- 1) **Daily Gift of Prayer** – pray the Rosary, the Divine Mercy Chaplet, participate in the daily Mass being live streamed – please make a commitment to prayer as we turn to our loving God during this great time of need.
- 2) **Gift of Involvement** – our greatest need for help right now is calling all families in our parish community. With enough help, we hope to be able to contact families regularly in the coming weeks. If you are able to help, please contact INSERT CONTACT INFO HERE.
- 3) **Gift of Financial Support** – I understand that this crisis will also have a financial impact on many, if not all of our parish families. Please know that I am grateful for any continued support you are able to provide in these very challenging times.

Contributions can be mailed to the Parish Office: INSERT MAILING ADDRESS HERE, or made online at: INSERT ONLINE GIVING LINK HERE

### **We were made for times such as these...**

In closing, I recently received an email from a fellow priest who reminded me that as a people of faith, we were made for times such as these. Now is the time to bring Christ more deeply into the hearts, attitudes, and actions of our families, our communities, and our world.

Please continue to pray for our parish community and the Church overall. May we be a reflection of God's love and mercy during this time of great need in our world.

You are in my prayers, please also pray for me.

Sincerely Yours In Christ,

Fr. NAME  
Pastor