

**From:** Fr. Michael J. Lumpe  
**Sent:** Friday, April 3, 2020 3:59 PM  
**Subject:** Update Letter to Priests

Brother Priests:

We will soon celebrate Palm Sunday and begin the Holy Week liturgies in a manner that we are not accustomed. But we do so with great faith walking alongside our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.

I know that many of you have made phone calls to stay in contact with your parishioners, especially the most vulnerable, enlisting the help of your deacons and parish and school staffs to make these calls. I would ask that you make an extra effort during Holy Week to reach out to your parishioners and school parents in the same way reassuring them that despite our physical separation from one another, spiritually we are bound by the love of Christ. As Saint Paul wrote in his Second Letter to the Corinthians: "He died for all, so that those who live should not longer live for themselves, but for Him who died for them and was raised again" (2 Cor 5:15).

There are some items I want to share with you today.

**FIRST:** A National Moment of Prayer on Good Friday is being organized by the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops. Please click on this link for information, and spread the word:

<http://www.usccb.org/news/2020/20-52.cfm>

**SECOND:** For a number of reasons I would ask that you be attentive in making sure that all keys to the tabernacle(s) in your churches are brought inside to a safe and secure place in your rectory.

**THIRD:** With Spring comes spring flower sales and similar fund-raising events for groups in our parishes and schools. We cannot allow those to take place with the stay-at-home order, and the fact that we cannot publicly celebrate Mass. If we cannot have Mass in public then we cannot have these kinds of events. Outreach to help feed the poor and shut-ins should continue to the level that it can, as long as safety precautions are in place; feeding the hungry (homebound, poor, homeless) is essential.

**FOURTH:** From the Office of Development and Planning:

During these unprecedented times of uncertainty and isolation, the Office of Development and Planning deeply appreciates the challenges our pastors and parish leaders are facing on a daily basis. In an effort to provide continuing support and guidance, please know that we include each of you in our daily prayers and stand ready to assist you in any capacity you may wish. While we know that you are already doing great work

attending to the spiritual needs of parishioners, we also know the great sacrifice and hardship caused by a decrease in financial support and the lack of weekly offertory collections. As so appropriately named by Bishop Brennan, these days call for extreme charity.

While each parish throughout our 23-counties has different online giving capabilities at the moment documents attached can be a great reference in these times. Attached you will find:

1. *Stewardship* - Considerations and Main Points of acknowledgement for reaching out to your parishioners.
2. *Inviting Stewardship* – this is a document that you and your staff can distribute to ministry leaders and parishioners, giving concrete examples and ideas for communicating the need for continued commitment to parish life.
3. *Drafts of sample letters* that can be used to encourage continued/new financial support through electronic giving or mailed in offertory envelopes.

The URL link to the *A Time of Extreme Charity* pages can be reached through the Diocesan Website Home Page by clicking on the GIVE tab on the menu bar.

Other sample wording and accompanying images for social media posts, emails, and phone scripts to promote ongoing stewardship to your parish can also be found on these pages.

Please know that we are praying for you and are here to support you in any way that we can. While we are continuing to work-from-home, we do receive daily emails and do check office voicemails regularly. Important contact information is listed on the *Inviting Stewardship* document and on the Development and Planning webpages.

May God continue to guide and bless us in this time of uncertainty, Andrea.

Episcopal Moderator for Development and Planning

Roman Catholic Diocese of Columbus

197 East Gay Street

Columbus, Ohio 43215

614-241-2550 ext: 1409

[apannell@columbuscatholic.org](mailto:apannell@columbuscatholic.org)

Finally, I pray that all of you have a restful weekend physically, and rest in the arms of our Lord spiritually.

Fraternally,

Bishop Brennan



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# EXTREME CHARITY – PASTOR’S TOOLKIT FOR COMMUNICATION

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1. Social Media posts and image 2. Sample letters 3. Sample email



APRIL 1, 2020

OFFICE OF DEVELOPMENT AND PLANNING  
[devmailbox@columbuscatholic.org](mailto:devmailbox@columbuscatholic.org)

## **FACEBOOK/INSTAGRAM POST (with image)**



**Option 1 :** Bishop Brennan has called these weeks of response a time of extreme charity. There are ways of extreme charity that go beyond social distancing and isolation. To learn more about what you can do in the Diocese of Columbus right now, visit [columbuscatholic.org/extreme-charity](https://columbuscatholic.org/extreme-charity).

**Option 2:** A Time for Extreme Charity – Please continue to pray for our parish and for our diocese, as we navigate these uncertain times. Consider another option of extreme charity – online giving to our parish and to the diocesan response effort. Visit [columbuscatholic.org/extreme-charity](https://columbuscatholic.org/extreme-charity) for more information!

# SAMPLE LETTERS FOR PARISHES WITH NO ONLINE GIVING

Mr. and Mrs. Stewardship  
197 E Gay Street  
Columbus, OH 43205

Dear Adam and Eve,

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 *{parish name here}*, 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

Mr. and Mrs. Stewardship  
197 E Gay Street  
Columbus, OH 43205

Dear Adam and Eve,

As we face the devastating effects of COVID-19 we remain a community of faithful bound by the love of Lord who is always with us. I pray this letter finds you well knowing that I continue to pray for you and our entire parish family. While we cannot be together physically in fellowship and worship, I am grateful that we remain united in prayer.

As the world, and many of you and your families, struggle through the damaging effects of a rapidly spreading virus and economic uncertainty, we know that our parish is not immune to this suffering. Now, perhaps more than ever, *{parish name here}* needs your prayerful stewardship. Just a few weeks ago, Bishop Brennan reminded us that we are now in an unprecedented time for extreme charity. Appreciating the anxieties and challenges you may be facing, I am asking those who can do continue supporting *{parish name here}* with weekly offertory donations through this extraordinary time in our history.

While masses and events have been canceled, ministries of the parish are still active and continues to depend on your stewardship and financial support. Ministries continue to meet via video/conference calls, meals continue to be prepared and offered to those in need, RCIA and our religious education programs have continued at home with our support. We must also remember that the doors will reopen and the pews will fill up again and we need your help to make sure this happens. I would like to ask for your help in three simple ways:

1. Join me in prayer. (Add special prayer/ intentions here – healthcare workers, politicians, etc.)
2. If you are able, support our parish offertory by mailing your gifts and envelopes directly to the parish. Although we do not currently have online giving as a parish, you can give online through the diocesan website, designating our parish [and school] as the recipient of your donation. You can also make a special contribution to the ***Diocesan COVID-19 Response Effort*** and help Bishop Brennan to continue support of all of our 23 counties. Visit [www.columbuscatholic.org/extreme-charity](http://www.columbuscatholic.org/extreme-charity) to find information to give online.
3. Encourage your fellow parishioners and family members to remain hopeful through this pandemic and do their part to keep social distancing and to remain at home as often as possible.

Yours in Christ,

Fr. ....

Pastor

Mr. and Mrs. Stewardship  
197 E Gay Street  
Columbus, OH 43205

Dear Adam and Eve,

At *{parish name here}* our primary concern is the holiness, health and safety of our parishioners. We are praying for all who have been impacted by the current health crisis, especially the sick and their caregivers. The spread of COVID-19 has truly impacted our parish, our community and our country. In an effort to remain connected with the parishioners at *{parish name here}* I wish to provide you with some important information about our parish and how you can stay involved safely from home.

- *If your parish has a presence on social media outlet or group messaging platforms such as Flocknote or Constant Contact*) If you have not already done so, I encourage you to follow *{parish name here}* on social media and sign up to receive parish emails as this will be the quickest way to share information in the coming weeks.
- While public Masses remain cancelled, I hope that you find comfort in participating in Mass in a virtual setting. *If your parish offers a virtual Mass, provide details here.* The Diocese of Columbus is compiling a list of Masses available via television, radio or online. This website lists a variety of virtual Mass options: <https://columbuscatholic.org/radio-tv-online-masses>
- We are committed to continuing the good work of our parish and the Church in this critical time of crisis when we are not able to go to Mass. Please use this time to transition to online giving using this link *{insert link to your parish's online giving platform}* or mail your weekly offertory donations to the parish *{insert address of parish}*. Alternatively, you may give online to *{parish name here}* through the diocesan website by designating *{parish name here}* as the recipient. This online giving option is available at: <https://columbuscatholic.org/extreme-charity>
- Please join me in prayer for the repose of the souls of those who have died, for the recovery of those who are sick, for the strength of healthcare workers and caregivers, and for an end to this crisis.

You may be assured of my prayer for all of you, our *{parish name here}* parishioners, and know that we are here for you. As Easter draws near, I look forward to celebrating the hope Christ brings with hearts renewed.

Yours in Christ,

Fr. ....

Pastor



Mr. and Mrs. Stewardship  
197 E Gay Street  
Columbus, OH 43205

Dear Adam and Eve,

We need you!

Even though we cannot be together now, I am praying with you and for you at daily Mass. I am confident that our Lord will pour the grace of these Masses out abundantly to the people of *{parish name here}*.

Friends, I need your help. During this time of trial and uncertainty, *{parish name here}* is called to be a light and a sanctuary of peace and hope to our community. The Church must do all she can to ensure that no one is left utterly alone.

But bringing Christ to people takes resources. Because we can no longer gather the offertory at Sunday Mass, we have arranged for an opportunity for online offertory at [www.columbuscatholic/extreme-charity.org](http://www.columbuscatholic/extreme-charity.org). The Diocesan Office of Development and Planning has created a platform for parishes in the diocese of Columbus to continue to give to their parish community. As you go through the steps to make your gift, please identify *{parish name here}* in the organization drop down list. Contact information for assistance can be found also with the link above.

Please consider making your regular offertory gift, and, if you are able, stretching yourself to offer a bit more on behalf of those who have lost their livelihood using the about site. If you make a gift, please share my request with others, encouraging them to give.

For 2,000 years, through pandemics, wars, and other crises, Catholics have generously served the world, on the front lines of caring for those who are sick. I need your help to make sure that *{parish name here}* can survive and even thrive to bring Christ's love and mercy to hearts that long to know Him.

Let us continue to hold each other in prayer. St. Joseph, protector of the Church, pray for us.

Yours in Christ,

Fr. ....

Pastor

## **EMAIL FOR PARISHES THAT ARE ALREADY ENCOURAGING THEIR OWN ONLINE GIVING**

[Standard greeting].

I pray this letter finds you well. I want you to know that I have been praying for you, and my heart is heavy that we are not united in person in our church. I am grateful, however, that we are united in prayer. I know we will continue to bring our individual needs, our community's needs, and the world's needs to Almighty God.

As our world suffers through the damaging effects of a rapidly spreading virus and economic uncertainty, we know that our parish is not immune to this suffering. As Bishop Brennan has said, now is a time for extreme charity.

**Please remember, even though our church is quiet, facility utilities do not go away. Needs of our community, ministry, and families still remain as well. We cannot meet such needs without your help.**

There are 3 simple ways to help:

1. If you are able, please consider continued support of our parish offertory by mailing your gifts and envelopes directly to the parish.
2. If you haven't already, please consider setting up a recurring gift online. It takes two simple steps and the rest is seamless, automatic, and very flexible. Please visit our donation page at **[parishname.org/donate]** to learn more about this important service.
3. You can contribute to the Bishop's Diocesan Response Effort and help our diocese continue its support of all 23 counties. Please visit [www.columbuscatholic.org/extreme-charity](http://www.columbuscatholic.org/extreme-charity) to find all the information you need to give online.

As I picture the other side of this experience, I am filled with hope. I know that with a great multitude of witnesses like yourself, the Lord's name will continue to resound throughout our community and that many wandering souls will be brought back to the Father.

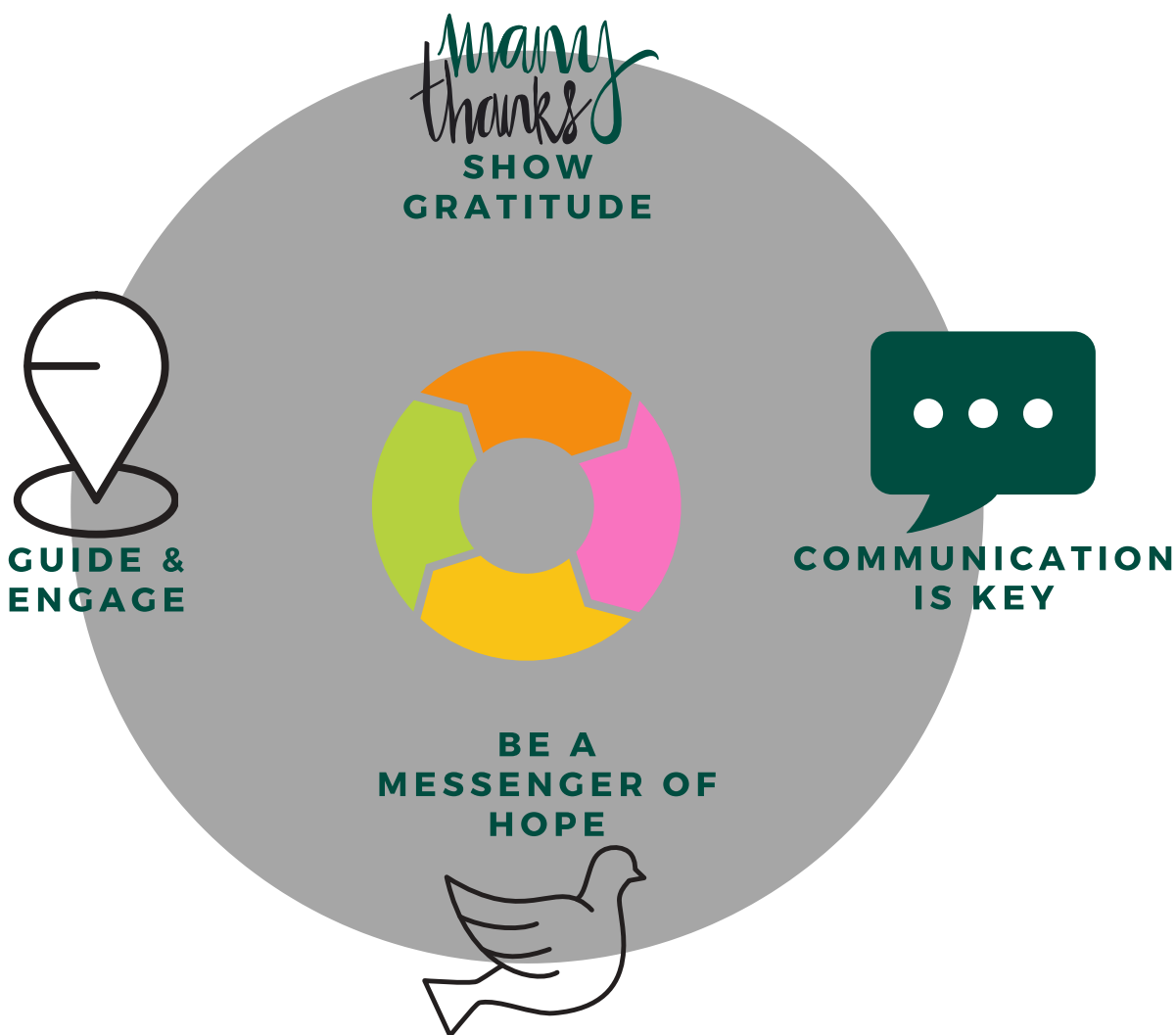
Please reach out to the Diocesan Office of Development and Planning with any questions. They can be reached at \_\_\_\_\_ .

# INVITING STEWARDSHIP



## STEWARDSHIP THROUGH TIMES OF REQUIRED SOCIAL DISTANCING

During this time of rapid change, new demands and great uncertainty, the *Office of Development and Planning* deeply appreciates the daily challenges our pastors and parish leaders are facing. In the spirit of support and encouragement, we are sharing best practices and strategies that can be used to support the spiritual and physical needs of your parish community. Frequent communication and clear messages of hope will be key. Opportunities to inform, guide, engage, and thank the parish community are critical to healthy stewardship. Please know that the staff here in the *Office of Development and Planning* are ready to assist you in whatever capacity you may need.



# INVITING STEWARDSHIP



## 10 IDEAS FOR STEWARDSHIP

**Reaffirm your mission and impact:** Share personal stories of how the parish has/is serving the needs of others.

**Increase or create a virtual presence:** Share links for daily Mass, Devotional Prayers, Rosary, Divine Mercy Chaplet, Novenas, 40 Day Consecration to Mary, etc.

**Schedule regular messages/updates:** Send a daily/weekly note of encouragement, love, hope, etc., via email to parishioners; post on website. Ask for prayer intentions. Facilitate a daily check-in from pastor.

**Make phone calls:** Create a phone tree and organize volunteers to set aside an hour a day to make 10-20 calls to parishioners checking in, letting them know you are praying and offering hope and comfort.

**Write hand-written notes:** Position our circumstances as a blessed time or opportunity to start or increase correspondence; people want/need to feel connected to their church, especially when they cannot physically be there.

**Share Catholic podcasts and other resources:** Research quality, uplifting and faith enriching websites. Make connections with virtual tours of great cathedrals around the world, live streaming Masses from monasteries, and beautiful Gregorian chant by religious sisters, etc.

**Become a virtual host:** Host a virtual holy movie night through the parish, i.e., *FATIMA*, *Two Suitcases: St. Bakhita*, *The Scarlet and the Black*, *The Mission*, etc. Host virtual bible studies, prayer chains, etc.

**Inform and guide:** Educate parishioners how they can continue their critical financial support and do not be afraid of "No." Understand, if parishioners cannot give due to circumstances, it is certainly okay - ask for prayers; most people respond to personal asks and appreciate the personal invitation.

**Encourage weekly offertory:** Remind people that this too shall pass and the community will be stronger for enduring this time of hardship; the weekly offertory is critical to the sustainability of the parish through crisis.

**Show gratitude:** Thank people for their stewardship commitment to the parish, including their support of prayers and financial giving.

## CONTACTS

**Andrea Pannell, Moderator**  
apannell@columbuscatholic.org  
614.241.2550 x 1409

**Wendy Piper, Parish Stewardship**  
wpiper@columbuscatholic.org  
614.241.2550 x 1406

**Tiffiney Hatem, Development for Catholic Schools**  
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614.241.2550 x 1403

**Fred Schoen, Online Giving & ParishSOFT**  
fschoen@columbuscatholic.org  
614.241.2536



# Memorandum

**TO:** Most Rev. Robert J. Brennan and Parish Priests of the Diocese of Columbus  
**FROM:** Andrea C. Pannell Episcopal Moderator for Development and Planning  
**DATE:** Wednesday, April 1, 2020  
**SUBJECT:** Stewardship – Electronic Giving Support for Parish Offertory

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During these unprecedented times of uncertainty and isolation, the Office of Development and Planning deeply appreciates the challenges our pastors and parish leaders are facing on a daily basis. In an effort to provide continuing support and guidance, please know that we include each of you in our daily prayers and stand ready to assist you in any capacity you may wish. While we know that you are already doing great work attending to the spiritual needs of parishioners, we also know the great sacrifice and hardship caused by a decrease in financial support and the lack of weekly offertory collections. As so appropriately named by Bishop Brennan, these days call for extreme charity.

While each parish throughout our 23-counties has different online giving capabilities at the moment documents attached can be a great reference in these times. Attached you will find:

1. Considerations and Main Points of acknowledgement for reaching out to your parishioners.
2. *Inviting Stewardship* – this is a document that you and your staff can distribute to ministry leaders and parishioners, giving concrete examples and ideas for communicating the need for continued commitment to parish life.
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Please know that we are praying for you and are here to support you in any way that we can. While we are continuing to work-from-home, we do receive daily emails and do check office voicemails regularly. Important contact information is listed on the *Inviting Stewardship* document and on the Development and Planning webpages.

May God continue to guide and bless us in this time of uncertainty, and may we enter this Passiontide with hearts united to that of our pierced Savior.

CC: Rev. Father Michael J. Lumpe, Msgr. Stephan J. Moloney, and Mr. William S. Davis.

# STEWARDSHIP & FINANCIAL GIVING

Need Help? Contact Andrea Pannell in the Office of Development and Planning at (614) 584-1820 or email [apannell@columbuscatholic.org](mailto:apannell@columbuscatholic.org)

## 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 currently have online giving, make the link or giving button very prominent on the parish homepage. If you don't already have online giving, you have two options:
    - a. Use the *Extreme-Charity* page on the diocesan website to collect donations to your parish. Direct parishioners to the Diocesan website and select the GIVE tab found at the top of the homepage menu. you will also find sample letters and resources to support you in your asks.
    - b. Set it up now. Call Fred Schoen in Development and Planning, at 614-241-2536 for help with finding a vendor and getting set up.

## 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 negative** tone or comments:*

*“If financial contributions don't continue, we will have to cut...”*

*“We are a struggling parish already, please help....”*

- *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.”*

*“It is critically important that we all discern our role in assuring our recovery....”*

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

- Invite continued financial support and provide ways to do so
  - Consider inviting gifts of prayer, ministry/involvement, and financial

### 5) **End with words of encouragement or a prayer.**