



Catholic Strategies COVID-19 Response for Parishes *9 Steps to Create and Market Online Giving*

HOW TO PROMOTE PROMOTE PARISH ONLINE GIVING NOW

- If you don't have it, establish online giving on a platform or through your diocese
- Update the parish website for online giving
- Ask parish council/finance council to call every registered household
- Send direct mail to every parish family
- Use email to communicate with parishioners
- Post a video message from the pastor on the website
- Use the bulletin to promote online giving
- Post ads/video messages on parish/pastor social media
- If available, post or share video messages from the bishop

Strategic Goal

As your parish struggles to meet operational expenses without weekly offertory revenue, now is the time to implement an online giving campaign. Doing this will have the ongoing positive impact of converting a greater percentage of parishioners to online giving. In addition to enabling you to count on regular revenue for the duration of the COVID-19 crisis, this strategy will also provide steady income when donations at Mass decrease for a variety of reasons, such as weather emergencies, seasonal variations in attendance, and parishioner vacations.

Steps to Achieve the Goal

- 1. Establish one or more online giving options.**
 - a. Choose a platform for online giving. Consider one that offers online, mobile, and text donations. Platforms such as www.donorperfect.com, www.tithe.ly.com, and eCatholic offer solutions especially for parishes.
 - b. Alternatively, if the diocese has created an online payment system, participate in it.
- 2. Update your parish website with your online giving form.**
 - a. Put a "Give Online" button prominently on the homepage in more than one place.

- b. On the donation page itself, include a message from the pastor or even an embedded video from the pastor explaining that online giving is preferred.
 - c. Acknowledge that some folks may prefer to use envelopes and/or mail their contributions. Encourage this also. Make the mailing address easy to find on the site.
- 3. Ask parish council/finance council to call every registered household to check in, and to promote online giving.**
 - a. Divvy up the parish list and give a section to every volunteer.
 - b. Focus first on a wellness check — make sure everyone knows about live stream Masses, resources for those who are struggling, etc. Find out who needs prayers, who is sick, any other news that should be passed along to the pastor.
 - c. Based on the tenor of the call, THEN bring up online giving as a convenient and beneficial way to help the parish and/or school. Make sure parishioners are aware that parish staff will be laid off or go unpaid without regular support. Offer to assist in getting it set up (walk the person through it over the phone).
- 4. Send two pieces of direct mail to every registered household:**
 - a. Immediately, **send a letter from the pastor** explaining the importance of maintaining support for the parish during the crisis, and encourage parishioners to mail in their regular donation or use online giving to set up their regular parish donations.
 - i. Include a QR code on the letter that leads to the page for online giving. (Use a free QR code generator such as <https://www.qrcode-monkey.com>).
 - ii. Include step-by-step instructions with photos (screen shots) of how to enroll.
 - iii. Include an enrollment form for people, such as the elderly, who are willing to contribute through recurring online payments but are not comfortable going online to set it up.
 - iv. FREE RESOURCE: Sample pastor letter.
 - b. Three to four weeks later, **send a postcard reminder** about online giving and parish support that includes a QR code to the landing page.
 - i. FREE RESOURCE: PDF of postcard for customization/printing.
- 5. Use email to communicate with parishioners. Consider creating a weekly or bi-weekly newsletter from the parish.**
 - a. If no email program exists yet, look at [Mailchimp](#), [Constant Contact](#), or [Flocknote](#) as email platforms.
 - b. Send a video message of comfort from the pastor.
 - i. FREE RESOURCE: Video script from the pastor about online giving.
 - c. Send the link to the online giving page.
 - d. Send the link to Catholic Charities for social or emotional support.

- e. Send the link to other Catholic ministries such as St. Vincent de Paul, etc.
 - f. Send links to pastoral resources during the crisis, such as a list of live-stream Mass options.
 - g. Send spiritual communion prayers.
6. **Each week, run an ad for online giving in the bulletin**, and include a QR code on the ad.
7. **Post consistently on all parish social media platforms (and on pastor/priest platforms if available):**
- a. Video messages from the pastor (not only about online giving but also pastoral messages, prayers, reflections on the daily readings, etc.)
 - b. Boosted posts for online giving with link to giving page
 - c. Boosted posts for live-stream Masses with links to resources
 - d. Post or share messages from the bishop about supporting parishes