



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

9 WAYS DIOCESES CAN HELP PARISHES IN FINANCIAL CRISIS

1. Encourage all parish to establish online giving
2. Link to all parish online giving pages on your diocesan website
3. Send a direct mail asking parishioners to support their parish
4. Send all parishioners an email asking them to support their parish
5. Send all parishioners an email with links to pastoral resources
6. Message from the bishop
7. Ad for parish online giving in diocesan media
8. Video message from the bishop
9. Use diocesan social media

Strategic Goal

As parishes struggle to meet operational expenses without weekly offertory revenue, dioceses can assist in helping them set up and market online giving for parishioners.

This response will have the ongoing positive impact of helping parishes convert a greater percentage of parishioners to online giving. In addition to enabling parishes to count on regular revenue for the duration of the COVID-19 crisis, this also provides 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. **Encourage/require all parishes to have an online giving platform.** For those that do not have one, set up a direct or pass-through mechanism through the diocesan giving platform.
 - a. If a pass-through function is allowed, create a donation option that allows donors to choose the parish to which funds will be distributed.
 - b. If a pass-through function is not allowed, collect bank information from parishes and set up a page for direct donations to those parishes.
2. **Create a landing page on the diocesan website with a list of every parish in the diocese, and a link to every parish's online giving page.** (For those without an

online giving page, link to the diocesan option in #1). Put a prominent banner on the homepage leading to this landing page.

3. **Send two pieces of direct mail to every registered household:**
 - a. Immediately, a letter from the bishop explaining the importance of maintaining support for their parish during the crisis, and encouraging parishioners to mail in their regular donation or use online giving to set up their regular parish donations. Include a QR code on the letter that leads to the landing page. (Use a free QR code generator such as <https://www.qrcode-monkey.com>). **FREE RESOURCE: [Sample bishop letter](#).**
 - b. Three to four weeks later, a postcard reminder about online giving and parish support that includes a QR code to the landing page. **FREE RESOURCE: [PDF of postcard for customization/printing](#).**
4. Using any collected email addresses (diocesan appeal lists, men's/women's conference lists, diocesan e-news list if one exists, etc.) **send an email to every known diocesan email address from the bishop** to include:
 - a. A video message of comfort from the bishop
 - b. Pastoral resources during the crisis, such as a link to a list of live-stream Mass options
 - c. Link to a spiritual communion prayer
 - d. Link to online giving landing page
 - e. Link to Catholic Charities for social or emotional support
 - f. Link to other Catholic ministries such as St. Vincent de Paul, etc.
5. If no diocesan e-news currently exists, **consider making the communication above at number 4 into a weekly or bi-weekly e-newsletter**. Include links listed above plus other spiritual or pastoral resources, etc.
6. **Include a message from the bishop about supporting parishes in the regular diocesan publication** (magazine or newspaper)
7. **Include an ad for the diocesan online giving landing page in the publication**, and include a QR code on the ad
8. **Create a video message from the bishop about parish support** that could be used at the end of parish live-streamed or video Masses. **FREE RESOURCE: [Script for video message](#).**
9. **Post consistently on all diocesan and ordinary social media platforms:**
 - a. Video messages from the bishop (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 landing page
 - c. Boosted posts for live-stream Masses with link to resource page
 - d. Back-end ads for online giving with link to landing page
 - e. Back-end ads for live-stream Masses with link to resource page