

2020



SPECIAL
EDITION

WISDOM

from ICSC strategic partners

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CCS
FUNDRAISING

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Services
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This special edition of Wisdom from ICSC Strategic Partners brings to us the voices of many of ICSC's most creative and innovative professionals. They have been asked to offer their gifts and talents to help our members navigate the path forward in this quickly evolving ecclesial and societal landscape brought on by the Coronavirus pandemic.

The contributors to this special edition are not only among the best and brightest, they are strategic partners who embrace ICSC's mission, give integrity to its vital Catholic traditions and are committed to continuing standards of excellence.

We pray that this collection of resources enhances your ability to make Christ's presence in our Catholic family of faith even more effectual, which ultimately, is at the heart of our work and ministry.

In this edition ICSC brings you:

- * ways to stay together when you can't be together provided by **ACS Technologies**.
- * the 90 day strategic offertory plan provided by **Blackbaud**.
- * timeless principles for fundraising provided by **CCS**.
- * seven lessons from the great recession provided by **GP Catholic Services**.
- * five things parish leaders can do in the heart of the crisis provided by **Greater Mission**.
- * steps to live stream your Mass and online giving anyone can use provided by **J.S. Paluch Company**.
- * the time for stewardship is now provided by **LPI**.
- * pandemic gratitude?! provided by **Lynch Development Associates**.
- * how to stay connected, support the mission, and keep the faith provided by **OSV**.
- * the complete guide to creating a digital strategy for your parish provided by **Pushpay**.

WAYS TO STAY TOGETHER

WHEN YOU CAN'T BE TOGETHER



Right now, the COVID-19 pandemic is the reason many parishes around the country are not meeting. It's important for you to know how to keep your community connected when you can't connect in person.

Here are a few ways that your church can thrive during the COVID-19 pandemic.

1. Encourage Together on Mobile

Just about everyone has a mobile device, and they are checking it constantly for updates, insights, and tidbits to guide their day. Consider sending individuals or groups messages with Scripture, quotes, or statistics that remind them of the goodness of God.

2. Worship Together with Live Stream

YouTube, Instagram, Facebook, and other social media platforms have live-streaming capabilities that are not too difficult to learn and implement. Whatever you do, don't stop worshipping with your parishioners.

3. Pray Together in Online Groups

Never underestimate the power of prayer. Leverage mobile devices, texts, and social media platforms to give people an opportunity to ask for prayer. Then have your prayer team or parish members actually "pray out loud" by writing their prayers on the forum you've chosen.

4. Study Together Using Forums

A simple and powerful recipe for leveraging online forums is:

Post a video or written resource with a particular teaching.

Discuss the materials, answering any questions your students or attendees have.

Give an assignment to the students and attendees and discuss the answers.

Assign next steps, activities, or follow-up learning.

5. Give Together with Online Donations

Now is the time to stress the importance of online giving. You might want to set up or promote an existing special relief fund (benevolence), staff support fund, or Catholic Charities to make sure that everyone's needs are met.

6. Serve Together in Crowdsourced Ways

In turbulent times people have unique needs. But when you can't get together, it's hard to assess needs and serve in meaningful ways. Ministries around the country are having people post needs in a common place - again, online groups, social media, and group texts - where others can see those needs and meet them one-on-one. It's all about mobilization.

7. Grow Together by Staying on Track

One of the many benefits of being involved in a church is accountability. Your parish should have an established pathway beyond RCIA for people to travel when they become part of your church. A collection of resources, discussions, and experiences people can interact with to grow in their faith.

Do you want to learn more about how to stay together as a parish when you can't be together?
Get the full version of this guide by clicking [HERE](#).

The 90 Day Strategic Offertory Plan

By Paul Marc Oliu

With nearly all Masses being suspended until further notice, the financial challenges parishes face are growing. Without parishioners in the pews, the weekly offertory, a critical source of revenue, may seem bleak. In light of COVID-19, except for parishes that have already done a major push for online giving, most are only guaranteed a fraction of their typical weekly offertory.

What Does The Plan Entail?

The Church must continue its mission despite the challenges that arise. And with the uncertainty of the current situation, Diocesan development offices must continue to do what they can to support their parishes. It may expand traditional roles, but to try to avoid parish financial struggles, it's good to have a strategy and a plan to put into action.

With that said, what can a diocese do? One strategy could be a **90 Day Strategic Offertory Plan**, and the goal is twofold:

1. To drive people to give online with recurring gifts and
2. To motivate and change parishioner attitudes towards giving by raising financial stewardship as an obligation to God.

This practice was very popular 5-6 years ago with evangelical churches. Obviously, each church had different results. But in some cases, the weekly average offering grew in excess of 15% year over year, despite flat to declining attendance rates. It certainly is not the end-all solution to the current crisis, but it could represent one of a multitude of ways to help the Church get through this time of trial.



Questions To Ask

Before jumping headlong into the 90 Day Strategic Offertory Plan, there are things each parish and diocese must consider.

1. Is this something you want *for* your parishioners or *from* your parishioners? Being transparent is key, so make clear what the strategic offertory plan is, and what it's for.
2. What's the path of least resistance? Make the strategic plan as easy as possible to support. A well designed and clear online giving form and/or pledge page can make the difference between adoption and disregard.
3. How do you thank and promote parishioners who get involved? Outreach is going to be key and thanking parishioners who commit to giving is even more important. This is where you'll really need your parish priest(s) to be on board and engaged.
4. How will parishioners stay engaged? It's not a one-day plan, it's 90 days. And if done right, parishioners will be givers for even longer. What will you do to keep the momentum going?

How Does It Work?

1. Create a single Offertory Giving Page
 - Should include drop down of all Parishes in your Diocese
 - Donation amounts should be smaller amounts (think traditional offertory amounts.)
 - \$5, \$10, \$20, Other
 - Recurring options: Weekly or Monthly
2. Build an appeal campaign
 - Create email templates
 - An introductory appeal form letter with the appropriate link to the Offertory Giving Page
 - Create a Thank You letter for those parishioners who register
 - Follow up asking for support
 - Send an impact email highlighting the work of the Parish
3. Optional, but strongly recommended, is a Peer-to-Peer (P2P) platform to encourage parishioners to act as agents for the Church to gather support.
 - Using a crowdfunding platform, your Parish will get more than just money. You will be able to grow your base of support, get new people involved, and re-engage with parishioners.
 - This is about **right now**. It's not a two-year fundraising campaign. Think through your strategy and get it out to parishioners to test is out. Pivot as you go, and learn what works best for your parish community.



Things To Keep In Mind

Strategically create content that can be used three times in three different ways. Use a different channel, edit for a different audience, and/or change the length.

- As an example, using a homily that talks about the 90 Day Strategic Offertory Plan, as your content.
 - Publish the homily to your website and include a link to the giving page
 - Highlight a key quote from homily and use link to giving page on Twitter
 - Publish an abbreviated homily to Facebook, with link to your giving page.
- Always include the link when you're live streaming a Mass.
- Don't forget that people give to people. Whenever possible, the pastor, parochial vicar, deacon, or a well respected parishioner should ask for support.
- Recognize those parishioners who participate. Money is valuable, but people are more valuable.
- Once your parishioners are engaged, make sure you have a plan to keep them engaged over the long haul.

The Goal

Ultimately, the objective of the 90 Day Strategic Offertory Plan is two-fold. The first is to shore up lost giving dollars as a result of Masses being cancelled due to COVID-19. The second is to drive parishioners to giving online, then encourage them to maintain that practice once Masses resume. According to trusted Blackbaud partner, [Prenger Solutions Group](#) –

- ✓ 51% of people receiving direct mail, go online for donations
- ✓ 59% of donors over age 66, have given online
- ✓ In the past year, mobile giving has increased by 205%
- ✓ Average monthly giving is \$52
- ✓ Average monthly giving online is \$128
- ✓ Parishes that post daily on Facebook see a 44% increase in giving
- ✓ Parishes that transitioned to online giving increased offertory by 9%



Don't let this time be a daunting experience, because with the right solutions, it doesn't have to be! By embracing technology, like so many are already doing, you can be confident in your ability to raise the necessary funds to carry on the mission of the Catholic Church.

About Blackbaud

Leading uniquely at the intersection point of technology and social good, Blackbaud provides software, services, expertise, and data intelligence that empowers and connects people to advance the social good movement. We serve the entire social good community, which includes nonprofits, foundations, corporations, education institutions, healthcare institutions, and the individual change agents who support them.





Timeless Principles for Fundraising

The Coronavirus and Philanthropy

Concerns about the impact of Coronavirus (COVID-19) underscore the nonprofit sector's vital leadership role in the welfare of our communities. At CCS Fundraising, our primary concern lies with the health and safety of our people, our nonprofit partners, and those in our communities at greatest risk.

We understand that many nonprofit organizations are seeking guidance on how to proceed during this time of uncertainty. CCS has extensive experience over the past 70 years in times of crisis, economic stress, and natural disasters. There are several lessons we have garnered through these experiences.

These lessons focus on the importance of continuous communication and engagement with stakeholders, prudent adjustments to short-term fundraising activities, and a focused commitment to staying the course of an organization's overall fundraising plans. Strong leadership and resilience have helped charitable organizations persevere through challenging times. Nonprofit organizations have achieved success through flexibility, creativity, and resolve.

In light of the current and rapidly evolving circumstances, CCS offers the following general principles and specific guidelines around fundraising efforts:

- **Increase communication:** Keep your stakeholders fully informed and deeply engaged. Donors and stakeholders are interested in how organizations are affected by the current situation, and what actions are being taken.
- **Avoid wholesale cancellation of fundraising plans:** Adhere to your overall fundraising plans and strategies, with reasonable adjustments to your day-to-day meetings, events, and activities, depending on your local circumstances.
- **Reaffirm your mission and impact:** Reaffirm your organization's mission and continuously remind donors of the impact of your work. If you have a special role to play in the current public health issue, explain it.
- **Develop a short-term action plan:** Develop a plan of action, including a communications plan over the next several weeks, featuring an outreach initiative of personal calls and emails to key donors and friends.
- **Leverage technology:** Find ways to more effectively incorporate video conferencing, podcasts, or virtual briefings that make meetings more dynamic and create more personal experiences regardless of distance. Consider how social media or other virtual platforms can serve as temporary alternatives to in-person convenings.
- **Motivate:** Redouble efforts to help motivate development staff, administrative leadership, and trustees by reminding them of the resilience of philanthropy in difficult times. Donors who feel engaged and connected will continue to support their beloved institutions, especially in times of crisis.



- **Share philanthropic information:** Share the latest philanthropic information to both motivate leadership and temper expectations.
- **Consider special briefings:** Consider hosting a series of teleconference briefings with stakeholders on issues pertinent to the current situation. Donors and constituents are interested in knowing how a nonprofit is responding to the current situation: whether classes, events, services, or performances are being altered or canceled; how employees are being cared-for; how operations are affected; if any new services or programs are being initiated in response to current circumstances.
- **Show empathy and concern for your stakeholders:** We have all been impacted by COVID-19 in some way. Giving is a two-way street and donors want to know that you value them and are concerned about their welfare. Offer any resources that might be helpful to your stakeholders.

In challenging times, those nonprofit organizations that stay the course and engage extensively with their stakeholders emerge successfully. These situations offer an opportunity for nonprofits to demonstrate their relevance and cement their relationships with their donors and friends. Donors look to these organizations as vital resources. In the past, those donors who stopped supporting specific nonprofits during or after a crisis did so primarily because they no longer felt connected to them.

The last point is particularly important, as it may feel like now is a moment to pause or delay your activity. It is very important to note that in previous downturns, those who continued to push forward in their efforts ultimately succeeded, and those who took a step back lost ground.

Thank you for all that you do to strengthen our communities and improve our world. We hope these principles, gleaned through many years of experience and periods of uncertainty, are helpful as you carefully navigate your development and fundraising efforts in the coming months.

Seven Lessons from the Great Recession that apply during the COVID-19 pandemic



“There is much that is uncertain. But this much we do know: Catholics remain philanthropic even – especially – during times of great uncertainty.”

We know this both from our own campaign experience and broader industry data. It is with empathy, confidence, and optimism that we encourage you to move forward with these same attributes. Need to talk? We’re here with you every step of the way.”

Church leaders around the world are huddled virtually trying to assess the impact that COVID-19 is having on their day-to-day ministries and how to adapt to ensure the safety of the communities they serve.

Meanwhile, with each passing day, stewardship and development leaders are also looking ahead and growing increasingly concerned about the impact this public health crisis will have on the economy – and subsequently, on their abilities to fulfill their missions or their abilities to fundraise.

But consider this: from 2005 through 2010, which contained the most volatile years of the Great Recession, the net decrease in philanthropic dollars was less than 0.5%. What may appear counterintuitive, upon closer inspection, is not entirely surprising; after all, humans are wired to give and our missions do not pause.

So, while we cannot fully predict what will happen as this global situation unfolds, GP Catholic Services reflects on our work during similarly tenuous economic times just more than a decade ago to offer seven important lessons.

1 Relationships are everything.

During turbulent times, clergy grow naturally concerned that their actions may damage relationships with parishioners. Clients that communicated with empathy and confidence during the recession quickly learned that relationships are buoyant and empathy – in the form of philanthropic support – tends to be given in return.

2 Communication preserves and strengthens trust.

Parishioners and other constituents are always grateful to have their voices heard but even more so during times of crisis. Throughout the campaign planning studies that we conducted in 2009 and 2010, we indeed heard concerns about both the future and the future of fundraising. But we also heard elevated levels of trust and respect that community members had for leadership – trust and respect that converted into active participation and giving.

3 Donors' interests become people-centric.

While there may be a tendency to take a step back from asking, leaders are acutely aware that their missions remain paramount. The faithful are acutely aware of this, too. During the 2008 recession, with the heightened need to access social services, healthcare, and more, community members rose to the occasion. After all, missions continue to be vital (perhaps even more so) to the people served by the Church, regardless of what is happening on Wall Street.

4 Donors are motivated to solve problems.

Often, gifts are motivated by the very problems created by turbulent times. In 2009, for example, amidst great uncertainty about the economic future, we counseled a client to solicit the most significant gift of the institution's history to address a massive problem: terrorism. Convinced that a weakened economy created additional post-9/11 vulnerabilities, the donor agreed to an eight-figure commitment.

5 Campaigns can thrive during even turbulent times.

During 2009 and 2010, we saw multiple clients launch campaigns while others pulled back. Clients that launched campaigns with confidence and clarity completed on time. Take one client, who launched a campaign on January 1, 2009: they ended at 22% above goal with unprecedented numbers of major, principal, and planned gifts. On the other hand, clients that decided to pull back from campaigns are still working to catch up today.

6 Planning and discipline pay off.

It's easy to get caught up in the frenzy of a crisis. However, deliberate planning in turbulent times is not only possible but productive. In partnership with our team, one nonprofit entered a disciplined process of campaign planning and budget expansion that created active buy-in from leadership. As a result, the campaign went on to raise more than double the previous campaign, despite launching the quiet phase during a recession. At its conclusion, we celebrated more than 50 gifts of \$1M+.

7 There are alternatives to a campaign with a capital "C".

A decade ago, many nonprofit leaders asked us, "Do we really need a 'Campaign'?" After carefully considering their situations within the context of data and expertise, we counseled some clients to enter a less visible major gifts initiative that cultivated and solicited their top prospects who understood their acute needs. This is a time for creativity, and all options should be considered when it comes to reaching funding objectives.

There is much that is uncertain. But this much we do know: Catholics remain philanthropic even – especially – during times of great uncertainty. We know this both from our own campaign experience and broader industry data. It is with empathy, confidence, and optimism that we encourage you to move forward with these same attributes. Need to talk? We're here with you every step of the way.

Elizabeth Zeigler is the President and CEO of Graham-Pelton and GP Catholic Services and can be reached at ezeigler@gpcatholic.com.

IN THE HEART OF THE CRISIS: FIVE THINGS THAT PARISH LEADERS CAN DO

Today, we face a scary and challenging time but there are things we can do to meet this challenge.

Many in our parish and our community are in need as their jobs have been reduced or greatly affected through this crisis. Calls and request for help have increased at the rectory and parish office. More and more people have been pressed into asking for help or seeking help from local food pantries, shelters and outreach agencies. Please know that all of them and you are in our prayers. We have been asked by several diocese and parishes what can be done during this time to help parishes assist those in need. Most masses are not even occurring and, in the large majority of parishes, that will greatly affect their ability to operate normally, let alone attempt to address the increase of need. Below are five key things that parish leaders can do. Please know that Greater Mission is here for you and are in our prayers daily.

- 1. Let God lead us:** Call the people of God to God in humble prayer
 - Livestream Sunday and daily Mass
 - Instruct in the way of Spiritual Communion
 - Invite to pray the Angelus at noon each day, especially on Fridays
 - Encourage meditation and contemplation on the daily Scriptures
 - Offer aids for praying the Stations of the Cross, the Rosary, the Divine Mercy Chaplet, special Novenas, and praying with your family
- 2. Connect with every family:** Be present to them, inform, uplift, care, love
 - Establish a parish telephone tree or enlist a group of volunteers to reach out by telephone to ten or more parishioners several times per week
 - Use Facebook and other social media to remain connected
 - Conduct ministry and small group meetings using Zoom or other video share solutions
 - Find out if parishioners are sick, and if they need prayer support, encouragement, or other forms of assistance
- 3. Rally to “who” we are together:**

Help your parishioners to appreciate, now more than ever, that we are the Church; the mission of the Church is ours, and all of us have a shared purpose in Christ. The Church is not just an institution, or simply a worthy organization where we “volunteer” or help out with some financial donation. The Church is us. In Christ, by the power of the Holy Spirit, and with the intercession of the Blessed Virgin Mary, the angels and the saints, we ourselves are changed and charged to be the change that is needed in our world.
- 4. Inspire to serve:**

Help your parishioners to appreciate, now more than ever, that we are the Church.

What can happen in families, friend groups, neighborhoods, communities, and the world? Mother Teresa asked people to do small things with great love. Maybe that is looking out for a neighbor or checking in on a family member via a short text message. People are really hurting. Some are sick. Some are caring for the sick. Some are deeply hurt financially. Some are afraid. There are many ways to serve. Inspire parishioners to look beyond just their own worries and to serve someone in even greater need.
- 5. Invite faith-inspired charity:**

The mission of the parish is vital. Our parishes do not collect fees from those they serve as universities or hospitals do. Parishes are not subsidized regularly by the government. While the mission of the Church is to care for the world, she requires the free and faithful generosity of its members to fulfill that mission. Especially now that some members have lost their jobs due to the crisis, invite the rest of your parishioners to continue their regular giving to the parish, or increase it if possible. Establish or encourage online giving and increase participation. If parishioners cannot give online, ask them to mail their regular contributions to the parish. Paying parish staff, benefits, utilities, insurance is critical to sustaining and expanding the mission of the parish; and all share in that opportunity.

Online Giving You Can Use Immediately

During this time of unprecedented crisis, the J.S. Paluch Company has decided to open up our online giving platform to all US Parishes effective immediately. You can start using it today.



Start receiving donations immediately via our online portal. Your parishioners can start giving immediately.

Gifts are sent to via check every 2 weeks along with a report detailing the donors.

Need your donations faster? We can get you set up for a direct deposit.

my.oneparish.com/give

Online Giving Anyone Can Use

Many online giving platforms are confusing and difficult to use. OneParish Online Giving is all on a single page. This means the link is easy to share and the process is amazingly fast. Most people can set up a gift in about 3 minutes.

What Does it Cost?

Zero fees, zero setup costs. The only charge is our processing fee of 3.9% + .30 for credit cards, 1.5% for ACH transactions. Seriously. No other fees or costs, ever.

We know this represents a paradigm shift for some parishes who are used to long setup processes, long contracts, many fees, and difficult-to-use systems. You deserve better.

We are leveraging the best and most modern technology from WePay and Chase Bank to make online giving less like a maze and more like GoFundMe.



574-347-8851



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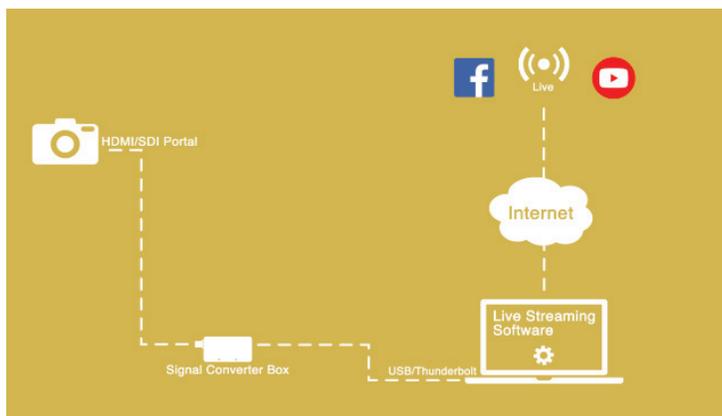

J.S. Paluch
Company

How to Live Stream Your Mass

The Mass is the center of parish life. Its beating heart. So how do you keep people connected when public masses are canceled? Livestream.

By now, you have probably seen several parishes and priests that are Live Streaming their daily or weekend masses. You might think it looks complicated, but it is actually very easy. You can do it and we will show you how.

If you're just now starting on this, expect to spend about \$300 to get set up. See the next page for a shopping list.



Camera + Converter + Laptop + Software = Livestream

Step by Step

1

Connect your digital camera to your signal converter box with an HDMI or SDI cord.

2

Connect your signal converter box to your computer using the USB cable included with the signal converter box.

3

Confirm you are able to get a signal from the converter box.

4

Open your live streaming software. (Paid product help center / open source help center)

Facebook

Open your live streaming software. (Paid product help center / open source help center).

Add the streaming key and server URL in your chosen streaming software.

Confirm you're sending a signal to Facebook.

Youtube

Open your live streaming software. (Paid product help center / open source help center).

Add the streaming key and server URL in your chosen streaming software.

Confirm you're sending a signal to Facebook.

Helpful Hints

If you can, try testing your stream on a PC and a phone. Make sure it looks good on both.

Play with the lighting! Test out different configurations to make sure you are keeping faces clear

When you do your first couple of live feeds, make sure you have a technical person there to both monitor the equipment for problems AND monitor the Facebook or YouTube page for any comments/concerns

Practice, practice, practice! Your first stream is not going to be your best. Embrace the process and you'll get great in no time.

Recommended Setup

Camera that has an HDMI or SDI out port. If you don't have one, you can choose from a great list here: <https://www.epiphany.com/blog/best-cameras-for-live-streaming/>

A nice tripod: <https://www.amazon.com/AmazonBasics-60-Inch-Lightweight-Tripod-Bag/dp/B005KP473Q/>

HDMI or SDI Cable (most cams use HDMI):

HDMI: <https://www.amazon.com/Postta-Ultra-Support-Return-Ethernet/dp/B011SN65ZY/>

SDI cable: <https://www.amazon.com/SDI-Connectors-Oxidant-Security-Systems/dp/B07GR-RKZ6Q/>

IMPORTANT: Don't use a USB cable between the camera and signal converter box because the video signal won't be as consistent.

Signal converter box: <https://www.amazon.com/MOKOSE-USB3-0-Capture-Windows-Grabber/dp/B071KPW3PH/>

A good USB wireless microphone: <https://www.amazon.com/Wireless-Microphones-FIFINE-Microphone-Transmitter/dp/B074C125TN/>

IMPORTANT: You probably want to get one like this that includes a USB adapter. The normal wireless mic you use for mass will probably not work.

Software for live streaming

Mac/PC paid software

Open source software

Facebook account, assuming you're streaming to Facebook Live

YouTube account, if you're live streaming to YouTube

A reasonably new laptop computer. Mac or PC, either work.

PANDEMIC GRATITUDE?!

“Pandemic Gratitude?” It seems like an odd thing to say during these times. What are we supposed to be grateful for - supply shortages, long lines, widespread cancellations, fear, uncertainty, panic?

While these reactions are very understandable, let's take a step back and look at this through our Lenten lenses. While the COVID-19 virus is causing one pandemic, how about Lent causing a pandemic of a different kind, one of gratitude and action. Each Lent we are called to **Pray, Fast and Give Alms**. We are grateful for the opportunity to focus on the gifts we have been given, reflect on how to use these gifts responsibly for the furthering of God's kingdom here on earth, and then act. So, firstly, for what can we show gratitude?

We are grateful and PRAY for...

- Government leaders who have taken bold actions to keep us safe.
- The technology that allows us to stay informed and connected - even when we are encouraged to maintain social distance.
- Medical science and the researchers who are working around the clock to find a cure.
- Medical personnel, doctors, nurses and first responders who are on the front lines risking their own health to care for those who are affected.
- School administrators and teachers who are working to continue the education of our youth as seamlessly as possible.
- Custodial, maintenance and cleaning staff who work endless hours to disinfect and sanitize our buildings.
- The Pope, Bishops and all our Clergy who continue to provide for our spiritual nourishment.
- All those who are actively placing the common good ahead of personal gain.
- The return to health of all those affected, their caretakers, medical providers and those working for a cure.

While we can pray and be grateful for all of those who are working to ensure our health and safety, it is natural to feel overwhelmed and, perhaps, that there is nothing we can do to help. But, in reality, there are many ways to use our gifts given to us by our generous God to come to the aid of others.

Continuing our Lenten journey, we can FAST from...

- Selfishness by purchasing more than we really need so that others can have what they need.
- The panic and anxiety that surrounds us and remain calm and responsible.
- Negative thoughts and trust in the Lord's love and strength for us to move forward following the advice of our local leadership.
- Self-centered actions fueled by fear and turn ourselves outward to contribute to community awareness and solutions.

And finally, we can practice GIVING ALMS and performing acts of charity to...

- Assist our neighbors, especially the elderly and most vulnerable, by shopping for them and taking care of their errands when they cannot.
- Remember to wash our hands for at least twenty seconds. Instead of singing, why not pray The Lord's Prayer and the Hail Mary? *That will be a bit longer than twenty seconds, but a few more moments of prayer won't hurt!*
- Be mindful that while many of us cannot attend Mass at this time, we can still save and mail our offertory gift to our parish or bring it with us when we are able to return, to continue the mission of our Church.
- Stay home if we don't feel well or if we are instructed to do so.

Do you recognize something here? Aren't these all things we are called to do anyway as responsible members of society? Yes, there is fear and uncertainty, but it is also a time to focus on the scriptural mandate to **“Be Not Afraid.”** For in these times, and all times, we know and trust in God's Word, **“the light that shines in the darkness and the darkness has not overcome it.”** (Jn 1:5) It is a time to use our gifts responsibly to face not only this, but all the challenges in our lives.

L•D•A

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STAY CONNECTED, SUPPORT THE MISSION, AND KEEP THE FAITH

BY KATIE HERZING, OSV SENIOR PARISH COACH



Like many, I was in shock as I read that there would be no public Masses for the foreseeable future. Again, the other day when I realized my county was under a “stay at home” order that meant we would also be without the Sacraments for Easter. To say this has never happened in my lifetime feels like an understatement. So, what do we do now? How are we good stewards during this time?

With the Bishop’s explanation of “Stewardship: A Disciple’s Response” I can’t help but think that Stewardship is more important than ever. This is the time we have been preparing for, and we didn’t even know it. I keep thinking that I’m like Esther and Joan of Arc: “I was born for this.” As I’ve been working with my parish to [live stream Masses on Facebook](#) and use technology to create a route for our clergy to [bring Jesus to their neighborhood for a visit](#), I’ve never been so grateful for social media.

So how does the church keep the faith in their community when their community is suddenly at home for the next few weeks or months? Below are a few things we’re doing at OSV to help you thrive during this time and not just survive, bunkered down until it’s over.

Join us on Wednesdays for a 1 hour Webinar where all departments of OSV are coming together to talk about “Keeping the Faith in our Parishes.” Each week we’ll share ideas for personal growth, offertory stability, faith formation, and community building. We meet Wednesdays at 11am Eastern, [you can register here](#). Previous sessions have been recorded and can be watched [here](#).

(continued on next page.)



HOW DO WE STAY CONNECTED? (CONTINUED)

The biggest question most parishes are asking us is “How do we collect the offertory when no one’s at Mass?” Now is the time to utilize your Digital Giving Solution! Share about it on social media, put a link on your website, speak about ways (and whys) to give during the offertory time of your Live Stream. Share how your parish is continuing to be the place where your parishioners can gather virtually. In order to ask for gifts in this way, you need be gathering virtually for Mass and other times of prayer.

Our team did a discussion about this very topic as well as showcasing our Digital Giving Solution if you don’t have one in place yet. Now is the time to get started! You can [view the recording at this link](#).

Our Sunday Visitor News has been posting amazing [reflections from priests](#), [news about the church & ideas for community building](#), and a daily newsletter about [Keeping the Faith](#) during this time.

Our publishing team also created a [new pamphlet entitled](#) “Faith and Common Sense: The Catholic Response to an Epidemic” which is being provided at no cost to all parishes. You can download the digital version or request additional copies at the link above.

As we continue to move forward in the coming weeks, we will continue to post news and ideas for parishes on our websites as well as at [Transform Your Parish](#). I’ll close with this quote from Archbishop Vigneron of Detroit, “What if this time becomes our finest hour?”

The Complete Guide to Creating a Digital Strategy For Your Parish

Reach your Parishioners Anytime, Anywhere

In the past month, COVID-19 has spread to all 50 states, and every diocese in the United States has suspended public Masses until further notice.

“That is more than 70,412,000 Americans (or 22% of the US population) who cannot worship in person—and most of their parishes are not set up to handle the technological challenge. And some have no one to help them figure it out,” said Stephen Lenahan, Director of Communications at St. Anthony of Padua in Texas. “Even at St. Anthony’s we have seen our giving decline the past few weekends because those that prefer to give by check or cash in the basket are unable to do so and some are losing their income.”

Digital tools and channels that were once considered optional are rapidly becoming essential and being able to pivot to a digital strategy is more crucial than ever. Here are some tips and tools to help you connect with your Parishioners—anytime, anywhere:

Live Stream Mass

It’s never been easier to go live to your parishioners. And better yet—you do not need a huge budget to create a memorable and meaningful experience. If you want to quickly pivot to meeting your parishioners online, you can simply use a smartphone!

- If you have an active Facebook or Google account, you’re all set. Simply login to Facebook or YouTube and follow these directions ([click here](#) for Facebook and [click here](#) for YouTube).
- If possible, consider a more robust platform like [Stream Monkey](#). And as a Pushpay customer, you can receive 30 percent off your monthly subscription.

For a front-to-back guide on how to livestream your Mass, [click here](#).

Get Creative With Digital Giving

The decline in in-person attendance does not have to lead to a decline in giving. You can still help your church remain faithful in their giving by offering a digital solution. Pushpay offers an [online and mobile giving solution](#) that makes it easy to give in a few clicks of a button.

Additionally, one of the best ways to enable people to give through their mobile devices is [Text Engagement](#). Having everyone pull out their phone and text your giving keyword to 77977 (if you’re a Pushpay customer) is the fastest and easiest way to enable your community to give online during service. Additionally, to make it easy for your live-streamers, be sure to add your giving link to your livestream page.

Communicate Updates Digitally

Whether that’s updating your website, sending an email, or posting a message in your church app—your parishioners want to hear from you. [Push notifications](#) are often one of the most underutilized yet most effective. They allow you to send messages to anyone who has your app. For tips on creating effective push notifications, [click here](#).

If you want to learn more about growing your digital strategy,
including how to communicate using best practices,
[download our free checklist.](#)



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JOIN US FOR A SPECIAL WEBINAR FOR THESE UNPRECEDENTED TIMES,
THE TIME FOR STEWARDSHIP IS
NOW

This new webinar will be offered **LIVE** on
FRIDAY, APRIL 3 AT 1:00 P.M. EST / NOON CST.



Sponsored by LPI, an ICSC strategic partner, the webinar will be hosted by ICSC board member Tracy Earl Welliver, LPI's Senior Director of Church Engagement and author of the book, "Everyday Stewardship: Living an Extraordinary Life."



Co-presenters on this webinar will include LPI's Keith Alberts and Michael Murphy, Executive Director of ICSC.



Please save the date for this important new webinar.

Information on how to register will be sent to you via email early next Monday.

