

From Jim Kelley's office – sample letter for pastors

<DATE>, 2020

Dear Parishioners,

At <PARISH NAME> 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 care givers. The spread of COVID-19 has truly impacted our parish, our community and our country. We will continue to communicate with you about our parish events and activities as often as possible so that you are aware of what is going on at <parish name>.

Our primary role is to provide for the spiritual and pastoral needs of the faithful. Additionally, as members of the broader community, we are committed to participating in the larger response by our cities and state. Bishop Jugis' decision to dispense from the obligation to attend Sunday Mass, as well as the canceling or curtailing of all other liturgical events and gatherings, was based on the CDC and state government guidelines. Local priests were to provide for the needs of their parishioners within these parameters.

We must continue to pray and support those most vulnerable – the poor, those with less stable employment, and parents who need to work and are unable to find childcare. In a special way, we want to support the elderly, sick and shut-ins who may feel isolated and lonely. In the spirit of Lent, I ask all of us to embrace the works of mercy with zeal and to practice a spirit of gratitude and generosity to others, whether it be using our time to pray, giving to our parish offertory, or donating to the Diocesan Support Appeal.

Please know that we are committed to continuing the good work of our parish and the Church at this time. We want to thank each of you for the many ways you support our mission, and ask that you please continue to support the work of our Church. Our parish is dependent upon your weekly financial gifts to continue its ministries 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>. We are grateful for your contributions.

Join me in prayer for the repose 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 health crisis. Please be assured of my prayers for all of you, our <PARISH NAME> parishioners, and know that we are here for you.

Sincerely yours in Christ,

<INSERT PASTOR SIGNATURE>

<PASTOR NAME>

Pastor