

## Remember your Sunday offerings to your parish

(possible image to use.....collection basket being passed?)

We are certainly living in some unprecedented and interesting times. As I write this article, the COVID-19 epidemic has forced the hand of many bishops around the country, including ours, to suspend public masses as well as a host of other parish activities. Because of this, and since parish members will not be attending Sunday Mass for a while, one of the most obvious and glaring concerns for the 130 parishes in our diocese is the potential loss of offertory income. Many of our parishes live just like many people – paycheck to paycheck, or in the case of a parish, Sunday-to-Sunday offertory.

Without doubt, the “social distancing” practices and suspension of Masses that are in place have created unique challenges to the way many people will financially support their parish. A far majority of folks in our diocese tithe to support their parish by contributing via the collection basket at weekend Mass. If our parishes are going to continue to thrive and deliver the necessary ministry we need during these difficult times, we then need to adjust the method of providing support to our parishes.

Just like in our personal lives, our parishes have bills to pay; lights, electricity, heat, church supplies, phone, internet, snow removal and the list goes on. I’m sure some parishes will be making changes and looking for ways to lessen the financial burden during these trying times. But, there will be expenses and they will need to be paid.

For those who support their parish by dropping an envelope in the Sunday offertory basket, let me offer a few alternative suggestions that will help keep your much needed offertory support going.

**US Mail** – simply drop your check in the mail and send it to your parish. For many, it’s as simple as putting the flag up on the mail-box and the mailperson will get it sent.

**Bill Pay** – many banks provide a bill-pay service. It’s a very simple process and your bank can easily walk you through it if you have any questions. For many, it can easily be set up on their bank’s website.

**On-line** – Many parishes have an online donation portal on their website. In most cases offertory support can be made using a credit card, debit card or directly from a checking or savings account.

In some parishes, especially in the rural areas of the diocese, on-line giving is not available. If you desire to give on-line, and after checking with your parish to determine it’s not available, you can give on-line to your parish through the Diocese of Fargo on-line donation portal. Just follow these 3 simple steps:

1. Go to [www.fargodiocese.org](http://www.fargodiocese.org) and click on “Ways to Give” – click on “Donate Now”
2. Choose “Other Programs”
3. You are now on the Online Donation page. Use “other” and make sure you put in what parish your gift is designated for and then follow the prompted instructions.

Once the donation has been made, an acknowledgment will be sent to you and your pastor.

With God’s grace and the time and talents He has given us all, we will navigate through these new challenges. Let us all remember in prayer all those afflicted by the virus and those who are caring for them every day.

On a side note..... Now is a great time to make sure both the Diocese and your parish have your email address, so we can keep in touch. If you want to receive occasional updates from Bishop Folda or the diocese via email, send your email to [Susan.LeMier@fargodiocese.org](mailto:Susan.LeMier@fargodiocese.org)