**Diocese of Des Moines**

**Department of Stewardship**

****

**Stewardship Messaging during COVID-19**

***With thanks to the International Catholic Stewardship Council Community Forum***

Suggested Ideas and Language for Offertory needs in a parish

*(ParishSOFT is offering FREE ParishSOFT communication tools)*

**Benefits of the CARES Act to share with your parishioners:**

Please consider the benefits of a 2020 charitable gift from the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act (CARES) Act can have on your Catholic parish or school:

* Section 2204 includes a new above-the-line deduction (universal or non-itemized deduction that applies to all taxpayers) for total charitable contributions of up to $300\*.
* **TRANSLATION: Even if you don’t itemize, a gift of $300 reduces the taxes owed in 2020!**
* Section 2205 lifts the existing cap on annual contributions for those who itemize, raising it from 60 percent of adjusted gross income to 100 percent.
* **TRANSLATION: Large gifts for those who do itemize reduce taxes owed even more in 2020!**

\*This must be a gift of cash, given directly to a charitable organization, and not a gift to a Donor Advised Fund.

**Message for ALL Communications:**

**Did You Know?**

While masses and events have been canceled due to the COVID-19 outbreak, the ministries of the Parish are still active in the community and continue to depend upon your financial support. The only change to the life of the Parish has been the elimination of group gatherings.

Ministries continue to meet via conference calls, meals continue to be prepared and delivered to those in need, schools and faith formation continue via virtual classrooms and home assignments, Sunday mass is being conducted and being streamed for your participation, and we continue to provide support to many of the service agencies throughout the area. Our Clergy continue to provide spiritual guidance and daily reflections.

While we navigate these uncertain and unprecedented times, we request your continued financial support either by signing up with Our Online Donation System or by mailing your weekly contributions to the Parish.

Thank you for your continued support!

Your Pastor

**Website Update:**

Please know we are committed to continuing the important mission of our parish at this time. To help us, I’m asking you today to continue your weekly offertory gift IF you are in a financial position to do so. You can drop it off at the parish office, mail it to us or consider using our parish website to donate. This site has set up specifically for electronic gifts (credit cards and debit transfers) to our parish at (add your parish donate now link here) (or if you don’t have online giving, use this information https://catholicfoundationiowa.org/make-a-donation/parishes-and-schools-relief/ once there, use the drop down to find our parish!).

All gifts will go directly to our parish ministry.

People will not be in the pews this weekend, but God’s Church continues, His love continues, and our faith continues. You remain in my prayers. God bless.

**Social Media Post/Content Ideas:**

[Live/Recoded messages are best so that the parishioners can view and see their pastor]

XXX Church Parish is doing all that we can to continue to provide all of our normal ministries to our people via a virtual environment. Check in with us daily (weekly) for a live streamed mass at XX am/pm. In addition, our parish is now offering resources online such as XXX and online giving for those parishioners who so generously feel called to continue to support the operations and ministry here at XXX Church Parish. Visit our website XXXX for more information.

XXX Parish encourages our parishioners to stay informed with what is happening here at XX parish through our website as well as visiting dmdiocese.org for up to date resources and information

Video of Father XX asking for prayer intentions during this time.

Please comment below with your prayer intentions so that Fr. XX can keep your intentions in his daily prayers during this difficult time.

XX Parish is excited to introduce a new way of virtual offertory giving in an effort for our people to continue to support the parish. Visit our website and click XX Button, where you can set up your offertory gift easily. Here are step by step processes you can follow to help you easily navigate the page….

• ParishSOFT offers these step by step resources.

We are excited to offer online giving as a way to allow our parishioners to continue to support our parish during this unprecedented time. Join us on XX Date for a live video, walking parishioners through how to use the new tool….

Kids are home for the next several weeks. Have Priest do a short two-minute video teaching kids to pray, connecting with the youth!

XX parish has been supported by the generosity of hundreds of families each year. Your weekly offertory gifts help our parish operate and offer the many ministries we provide to our parishioners and for that we are incredibly grateful. In an effort to continue that support, our parish is now offering online giving for parishioners who desire to continue supporting our parish ministry and operations. For more information, visit our website at [insert link] and select donate today.

**Text/Voicemail Options:**

XX Parish is now offering streaming masses daily [Insert mass info], online resources for your family, prayer life, and online offertory giving. All of which can be found on our website or on our social media page at [insert web link].

Using texting solution: Text XXXX for our virtual mass and sacramental resources

XX parish is excited to bring our parish offertory to our website, giving our parishioners an opportunity to support the operations of our parish online. Text XXXX to support XX parish today.

**Tithing Call Script:**

Good Morning/Afternoon (say their name):

My name is (your name) and I am calling today to check in, how are you doing/ feeling? I know we are all finding a somewhat new normal in our day; and are looking forward to getting back to Mass and our families/ friends/work.

Please know we are committed to continuing the important mission of our parish at this time. To help us, I’m asking you today to continue your weekly offertory gift IF you are in a financial position to do so. You can drop it off at the parish office, mail it to us or consider using a special link our parish has established specifically for electronic gifts (credit cards and debit transfers) to our parish at (list your link here). All gifts will go directly to our parish ministry.

People will not be in the pews this weekend, but God’s Church continues, His love continues, and our faith continues. You remain in my prayers. God bless.

**Email/Letter:**

Dear <Informal Name>,

“Be Not Afraid!” These powerful and reassuring words are the most repeated phrase in Scripture and are found in Genesis and go all the way through Revelation. Why does the Lord say this phrase over and over? It is because, as a loving Father, He wants us to know that He will be with us through everything.

It would be an understatement to say that we are living in unprecedented times for the modern world. The Coronavirus is a serious medical situation, but fear and panic are the real enemy right now. As we move through these uncharted waters I want you to know that I am praying for you, for your family and for the Church.

For the safety of people and to help curb the spread of the virus, Bishop Joensen has cancelled masses at this time. This decree does not dispense us from “Keeping the Lord’s Day Holy.” We should, as Catholics turn to the Lord always, but even more during these difficult times. In this time of crisis I implore you seek the Lord by entering the Scripture, and through fervent prayer, especially the rosary and Liturgy of the Hours. As the Church suffers through this time of trial please be reminded of what the Lord says about worrying in the Gospel of Matthew… *“Therefore I tell you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat, or about your body, what you will wear. Is not life more than food and the body more than clothing?”* MT 6:25.

As your pastor I ask that we put our efforts and thoughts into faith and not worry. I invite you to visit our website and social media page where we will stream daily masses, put virtual resources for our parishioners and provide online offertory giving opportunities to our parishioners who want to express their generosity and share in God’s blessings. All of these things can be found online at XXXXX. Let us take this time as an opportunity to come together as the family of God, in spirit and in prayer, to re-establish that our faith is in Him and not in the world.

We, as Catholics, have a strong history of coming together and supporting each other during times of crisis. I have no doubt in our ability to overcome this one as well.

Be assured of my prayers for you in the private Masses that I offer. I look forward to the day when we can gather at the altar for the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass as One Body once again.

Sincerely in Christ.

Pastor

Parish Name

Dear <parishioner name>,

These are trying times for all of us. I pray for you each of you daily. I know you’re worried, as am I. But we are a faith-filled people so we know God is with us. We are in this together and we are rising to the occasion.

Please know we remain committed to continuing the important mission of our parish at this time and moving forward.

To help us with that mission, I’m asking you today to continue your weekly offertory gift IF you are in a financial position to do so. You can drop it off at the parish office, mail it to us or consider using our parish website to donate. This site has set up specifically for electronic gifts (credit cards and debit transfers) to our parish at (add your parish donate now link here) (or if you don’t have online giving, use this information https://catholicfoundationiowa.org/make-a-donation/parishes-and-schools-relief/ once there, use the drop down to find our parish!) All gifts will go directly to our parish ministry.

Thank you for your prayerful consideration.

People will not be in the pews this weekend, but God’s Church continues, His love continues, and our faith continues. You remain in my prayers.

God bless.

<pastor name>

**Out of office message for parishes:**

Thank you for your email. We're away from our desks at the office learning how to work remotely and provide help as we can.

We're live streaming Masses each morning (check out our Facebook Page), having a communal Scripture Reading and Reflection each evening, and even XXXX. We have a team of parishioners connecting with each registered household to see if they need anything. Will you be a part of that team?

Please realize this crisis is having an impact on our parish operations as well. PLEASE CONTINUE TO SUPPORT THE CHURCH THROUGH THE USE OF YOUR OFFERING ENVELOPES OR BY USING OUR ONLINE DONATION SYSTEM. Your generosity is what is making all of these extra and new efforts possible!

If there's anything I can do to help you, please let us know! We're returning messages (and emails) as quickly as we are able. New information will always be on our website.

Thank you for your continued support!

Your Pastor