



General Recommendations for Parishes

A significant number of parishes have already implemented some creative and resourceful pastoral strategies during the COVID-19 crisis. If guidance on some basic recommendations is needed, the items offered below could be of help in formulating an action plan:

1. Ensure that you, your staff, parish council, ministry leaders, and volunteer coordinators exchange updated contact information.
2. Ensure that you and your team have the tools they need to keep on working and serving during the emergency: phones, active email addresses, computers, and a stable Wifi connection.
3. Since all aspects of life are rapidly moving online, do everything possible so that you and your team can use some of the digital tools that will allow you to conduct virtual leadership meetings, share information with your community, and provide spiritual and formation resources to your parishioners: a Facebook page, a FlockNote subscription, a Zoom account (or another similar service that will allow you to conduct meetings and classes online).
4. It is crucial to open personal channels of communication with as many members of your parish as you can. To do that, you will need a team of people working with you on this task. If you are short on staff, ask for the assistance of your ministry leaders (which tend to have active communications channels of their own), as well as from parish volunteers.
5. Ensure that everyone in your community receives a phone call from the parish letting them know that they are not alone, asking them if they need any help during the emergency, and inquiring if they know of somebody else you should be reaching out to.
6. Ensure that the contact information of those who are most vulnerable (the poor, the elderly, those with underlying health conditions, the homebound, etc.) is included in a specific list that can be used by your team to check-in periodically with them over the phone.
7. Use the above-mentioned tools and channels of communication to share information with your community on how can they follow the Mass online, share spiritual, educational, and formation resources (many of which are available through the DPM webpage) as well as ask for help for those who are in greater need.
8. To keep the information flowing through personal contacts, consider building a phone tree that will allow you to reach many people very quickly via phone with the help of your community.
9. Ensure that your parishioners know which means you are making available for them to be able to continue providing the parish with their gifts and donations.



10. Regarding the administration of the sacraments and similar ministries, follow the instructions regularly provided by Fr. Jim Fischler, C.I.C.M, Vicar for Clergy.
11. Regarding HR, business and financial matters, follow the instructions regularly provided by the Archdiocesan Human Resources Office and the Vicar General.
12. Need help with any of the above-mentioned technological tools? Contact us and we will be happy to provide you with the necessary instructions and tutorials. You can do so by reaching out to your Parish Life Liaison or by sending an email to pastoralministries@archsa.org.
13. Let people in need know that they can reach out to Catholic Charities. A complete list of their services can be found [here](#). People who are in need can call 210-226-6178 to be screened to receive basic needs.
14. Invite people to give, donate, or volunteer with Catholic Charities. Help is urgently required. Food donations can be dropped off at the headquarters of Catholic Charities at 202 West French Place from Monday through Friday during their business hours of 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Can't drop off food? Invite your parishioners to donate online using the link that can be found [here](#).