

# Parishioner COVID-19 Phone Campaign

## PURPOSE:

This template is designed to be a starting place for having volunteers/staff help contact all/some of your parishioners.

## RATIONALE:

Even though we cannot physically be together at this time, the parish should still be an important part of the life of every Catholic. As such, the parish still cares for these souls to the best of its ability despite current obstacles.

## OBJECTIVES:

- 1) Check-in on the well-being of parishioners.
- 2) Communicate key parish updates.
- 3) Collect prayer intentions.

## PROPOSAL:

- **Enlist the help of a small number of volunteers and/or staff to call each member of the parish.** This does not have to be as daunting as it sounds. Ten volunteers each calling ten families each day over the course of ten days can attempt contact with 1000 families in a short amount of time.
- **Each conversation would primarily accomplish the objectives of checking in on parishioners, communicating key updates, and collecting prayer intentions.** This is meant to be conversational, personal, and pastoral. Other secondary objectives could be included and the whole thing can be tailored to your parish's needs.
- **Volunteers report back any collected information to a parish staff member or designated lead person.** This person owns this project and then takes care of disseminating collected information to the right people and places.

## EXAMPLE:

Suppose Parish 123 has designated their Business Manager / Communications Director / Parish Council President to lead this project. With input from the Pastor, Staff, Parish Council, personal network, etc. this person secures commitments from enough volunteers so that each person is responsible for connecting with approx. 10 families each day over the course of several days.

These volunteers then each make their phone calls using information provided to them by the Lead and/or additional resources such as a parish directory. They attempt to call everyone on their list and have a conversation with every family they connect with. For families they don't connect with, they leave a message with any pertinent information, and then make up to two additional attempts to connect. See sample scripts below.

Suppose that the volunteer gets through their list and finds out that 2 of their families have been particularly affected by the Coronavirus pandemic (e.g. are themselves diagnosed, lost their job, temporarily laid off, caring for sick family, etc.). These specific needs are communicated back to the Lead. The Lead disseminates the information to the correct people for additional follow-up e.g. families struggling to pay bills are referred to the local St. Vincent de Paul chapter, while families who are dealing with sickness receive an additional call from the Pastor/Staff, and families with job loss / are referred to the Business Manager.

## SAMPLE SCRIPTS:

### Voicemail:

Hello (Parishioner Family Name) family, this is (Volunteer's Name) calling on behalf of Fr. (Pastor's Name) and (Parish Name). I just wanted to check in and see how you are doing. We also wanted to let you know that the parish is (Parish Update #1), (Parish Update #2), and (Parish Update #3). Know that we're praying for you in a special way right now. Feel free to call me back at (Volunteer's Phone #) or I will try to give you another call in a couple days.

### Phone Conversation:

Hello, this is (Volunteer's Name). May I speak with Mr. or Mrs. (Parishioner Family Name). Hi (Parishioner first name), I just wanted to give you a call on behalf of Fr. (Pastor's Name) and (Parish Name) and see how you and your family are doing right now. How are you holding up?

(Conversation about how they're doing)

(Transition to Parish Updates) I wanted to let you know about a couple updates from the parish:

- (Parish Update #1)
- (Parish Update #2)
- (Parish Update #3)

(Any follow up conversation from those updates)

Finally, Fr. \_\_\_\_\_, the parish staff, and us volunteers who are helping with outreach want to be able to pray for you and your family. Is there anything in particular that I can share with them to be praying for?

(Note the prayer intention, follow up conversation as needed)

(If volunteer and parishioner are open to it, they could pray together right there on the phone)

It was so good getting to catch up with you. Please let me or the parish know if you need anything in the coming days. God bless. Bye.

## OTHER IDEAS:

Here are a couple other ideas you might consider connecting to a phone campaign like this:

- **Share how future communications will go out.** This might be one of your parish updates or it might be its own point entirely. Either way, consider sharing how you plan to stay in touch through all of this. For example, our website includes this info, we will email this often, mail this often, and are on social media this often.
- **Update communication preferences.** If you have a parish mass email system, consider checking whether each family receives those emails and, if not, whether you could add their email to the list to better communicate updates to parishioners at this time.
- **Make it easy for your volunteers.** Consider using an online form (such as a Google Form, Formstack, etc.) that could serve both as a script and note taking / data collection tool for your volunteers. This could expedite the turnaround time for getting parishioners the help and pastoral care they need while making it easier for your volunteers and team as they get the information to the right people. See the attached PDF version of a sample Google Form or email [mreinkemeyer@catholiccincinnati.org](mailto:mreinkemeyer@catholiccincinnati.org) for view access of the Google Form in order to make a copy for your parish's use.