Offertory Recovery Strategy

Surviving and Thriving During the Pandemic
Offertory Response During the Pandemic

• Analyzed parishes where offertory remained consistent to pre-pandemic levels or increased

• Nationally, on average, parish offertory is down 20-30% from last year

• Parishes which act can likely achieve their 2019 numbers

• Parishes which do not act will continue their current trend and likely end the fiscal year down 30-40% compared to 2019
## OFFERTORY TRENDS

Compared to Prior Year

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Decrease</th>
<th>Sep-20</th>
<th>Oct-20</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0 - 12%</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>35%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13 - 20%</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>21%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21% +</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>31%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>83%</td>
<td>86%</td>
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**Increased**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Sep-20</th>
<th>Oct-20</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>14%</td>
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Offertory Response During the Pandemic (Part 2)

• Identify factors in common across a sample of parishes
  • What was done to be successful in the offertory
  • How did they do it

• Provide opportunity to share insights and best practices
Panel Discussion (1/5)

• Tell us about the role of prayer for yourself and your team for your parish(es) during the pandemic.

• How did you engage and invite parishioners to be generous, or more generous, during the crisis?
  • What was the discernment process like for you in deciding how to act?
Panel Discussion (2/5)

• What do you see as the relationship between discipleship and increased generosity?

• Who works with you in serving the pastoral needs of your parishioners?

• Who did you consult as you developed a strategy for your parish(es) to face the impact of the pandemic?
Panel Discussion (3/5)

• What strategies did you choose and why?
• How different are these strategies from what you were doing before the pandemic?
• How has your strategy evolved over the course of the past few months?
Panel Discussion (4/5)

• Let’s talk about communications!
  • What was your main message to your parishioners at the beginning of the pandemic?
  • Did you have a communication plan specifically related to financial support? If so, what was it?
  • What forms of communication have you used to stay connected to your parishioners?
Panel Discussion (5/5)

• What is one thing you would recommend to those listening who want to work on stabilizing their parish offertory?

• What do you feel was key for your parish(es) in surviving and thriving during this pandemic?

• What would you have done differently?
Parishioner Engagement – Sustained Presence

• Rebuilding a sense of community that fits the situation and demonstrates to parishioners how the parish adds value to their lives

• Focusing on community-minded language and events, keeping the church buildings open for prayer, offering sacraments while following guidelines

• Continuing the mission regardless of the circumstances
Visibility to the Community

• Activity visible to all outside the buildings and in the community
• Virtual programming for faith formation and sacramental preparation
• In person and online
  • Livestreamed Masses, Novenas, Rosaries, Prayer Services
  • On Facebook, YouTube, Parish Website, Local Community Access Media
  • With recordings available anytime
Continued Sacramental Life

• Daily and Sunday Mass
• Adoration
• Confession
• Prayer Groups and Services
• Bible Studies
Service to the Community

• Help parishioners pay bills
• Go grocery shopping for older parishioners
• Provide food pantry, gift card, or food prep assistance
• Ensure everyone feels safe by following all appropriate protocols and restrictions
Communication – Starting with the Pastor

• Strong, positive, Christ-centered messaging from all parish leaders – especially priests and especially pastors – had the greatest effect on rallying the community.
Communication – Continued Over Time

• Phone calls from volunteers to check in with parishioners
  • Focused on the well being of parishioners and how the parish can be of assistance
  • Consider the phrase “The pastor asked me to give you a call”

• Various forms of communication
  • Pulpit announcements, the bulletin, the website, social media, e-communication, and written letters
Communication – Social Media Tools

• Recorded messages on Facebook and parish websites
• Special events via Facebook Live
• Record and post parish events for all parishioners to see
• Regularly (at least weekly) video or e-mail messages to clarify messaging, protocols, and what is happening in the life of the parish
Tools to Address the Financial Challenge

• Consistent and frequent messaging about giving
• Communications and marketing drive offertory
  • Regularly ask for financial support
  • Regularly mention and briefly explain parish finances
  • Extend personal invitations for feasible commitments
  • Provide monthly communications with ongoing parish needs
  • Ask for support despite difficult times, in terms of both money and volunteers
  • Be honest about the state of the parish finances
Successfully Addressing the Financial Challenge

• Had a pastoral and financial plan
• Actively engaged parishioners
• Remained rooted in prayer
• Monitored offertory to note trends
• Maintained or increased online presence
• Regularly thanked donors
Financial Transparency

• Share financial information
  • Publish offertory totals regularly
  • Report monthly on parish expenses and offertory

• Transparency about financial situation and needs
  • Leads to parishioner ownership of all the activity of the parish and excitement about what everyone in the parish can do together
Characteristics of a Pandemic Recovery Plan

• Continue Sacramental Life and Mission-Oriented Activity
• Communicate
• Engage People and Resources
• Work towards a long-term cultural shift in how parishioners view giving to their parish
Next Steps

• Maintaining presence in the lives of your parishioners
  • Developing a strong pandemic pastoral strategy

• Communicate & Outreach
  • Developing a communications plan
  • Talk about Mission and talk about offertory
  • Digital Fundraising

• Identifying Resource needs
  • Modernize parish approach using social media tools
Contact your regional consultants

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