



COVID-19 Response for Catholic Schools
Communications plan for parish giving and 20-21 enrollment

STEPS TO PROMOTE PARISH GIVING AND 20-21 ENROLLMENT

Promote parish giving:

- If your parish has not yet established an online giving program, [see this plan](#)
- Update your school website with a link to parish online giving.
- Ask your parent council and/or marketing volunteers to call every school family
- Send a direct mail letter to every school family
- Include a message about online giving in your parent emails
- Post a video message from the pastor and/or principal on the website
- Post ads/video messages on school/parish social media

Promote 20-21 enrollment:

- If possible, implement a waiver of enrollment deposits for 20-21 and give a tuition credit for those that have already enrolled/paid.
- Implement online enrollment.
- Take a headcount.
- Have teachers make “We can’t wait” calls to next year’s classes.
- Launch a social media campaign “Can’t wait to go back!”
- Post ads/video messages on school/parish social media
- Include enrollment ads in the weekly parish bulletin.

Steps to promote online giving to the parish:

1. **If the parish does not yet have a robust option for online giving, [see this plan](#).**
2. **Update your school website with a link to parish online giving.**
 - a. Put a “Give Online” button prominently on the school homepage in more than one place.
 - b. On the donation page itself, make sure the pastor’s message includes a reference to how parish donations support the school.
3. **Ask parent council/school marketing volunteers to call every school family to check in, and to promote online giving.**
 - a. Focus first on a wellness check — ask how school-at-home is going, make sure everyone knows about live stream Masses, resources for those who are struggling, etc. Find out who needs prayers, who is sick, any other news that should be passed along to the principal or pastor.
 - b. Based on the tenor of the call, THEN bring up online giving as a convenient and beneficial way to help the parish and school. Make sure school families are aware that teachers and staff could be laid off or go unpaid without regular support. Offer to assist in getting it set up (walk the person through it over the phone).
4. **Send two pieces of direct mail to every school family:**
 - a. Immediately, **send a letter from the principal and pastor** explaining the importance of maintaining support for the parish during the crisis, and encourage school families to mail in their regular parish donation or use online giving to set up their regular parish donations.
 - i. Include a QR code on the letter that leads to the page for online giving. (Use a free QR code generator such as <https://www.qrcode-monkey.com>).
 - ii. **FREE RESOURCE: [Sample principal/pastor letter](#).**
 - b. Three to four weeks later, **send a postcard reminder** about online giving and parish support that includes a QR code to the landing page.
 - i. **FREE RESOURCE: [PDF of postcard for customization/printing](#).**
5. **Use regular school email to communicate with school families.**
 - a. Create a regular special section in your school e-newsletter for “Supporting our School”
 - b. Include a video message from the principal explaining how crucial it is for school families to continue their parish donations.
 - c. Include the link to the online giving page.
 - d. Include a link to Catholic Charities for social or emotional support.
 - e. Include a link to other Catholic ministries such as St. Vincent de Paul, etc.

- f. Include links to pastoral resources during the crisis, such as a list of live-stream Mass options.
 - g. Send spiritual communion prayers.
6. **Each week, run an ad for online giving in the bulletin** (if the bulletin still is being produced and mailed), and include a QR code on the ad.
 7. **Post consistently on all parish social media platforms (and on pastor/priest platforms if available):**
 - a. Video messages from the principal about how teaching is going (success stories)
 - b. Boosted posts for online giving with link to giving page
 - c. Boosted posts for live-stream Masses with links to resources
 - d. Post or share messages from the bishop about supporting Catholic schools

Steps to promote 20-21 enrollment:

1. **If possible, implement a waiver for enrollment deposits.**
 - a. Notify school families that the waiver has been instituted. Encourage families that have not yet enrolled to do so immediately.
 - b. For those that already enrolled, let them know their tuition will be reduced by the amount of the deposit they previously paid.
 - c. Advertise “No enrollment deposit required” on social media.
 - d. If possible, put a banner in front of the school building to advertise this.
2. **Implement online enrollment via your school website.**
 - a. To quickly implement, create a link on the website to a simple Google form.
3. **Take the temperature of your school community.**
 - a. Use [Survey Monkey](#) to send a survey to school families to gauge their intentions for the fall.
 - b. Include satisfaction questions in the survey about how families perceive the school’s performance during the school-at-home period.
 - i. [FREE RESOURCE: Sample survey questions.](#)
4. **Have teachers make “We can’t wait” phone calls to next year’s class.**
 - a. Whether or not they are yet enrolled for next year, have teachers call every student in the current class behind theirs to say, “I can’t wait until next year when you’re in my grade!” Build up the students’ confidence that next year will be better and that teachers are excited to have them back in the school.
 - b. Encourage families to follow all school social accounts. Have teachers tell students/families about the upcoming social media campaign.

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 - a. Immediately, **send a letter from the principal and pastor** explaining the importance of maintaining support for the parish during the crisis, and encourage school families to mail in their regular parish donation or use online giving to set up their regular parish donations.
 - i. Include a QR code on the letter that leads to the page for online giving. (Use a free QR code generator such as <https://www.qrcode-monkey.com>).
 - ii. **FREE RESOURCE: [Sample principal/pastor letter](#).**
 - b. Three to four weeks later, **send a postcard reminder** about online giving and parish support that includes a QR code to the landing page.
 - i. **FREE RESOURCE: [PDF of postcard for customization/printing](#).**
6. **Launch an enrollment update version of your school newsletter using the “We can’t wait to go back” theme — [FREE resource: email banner](#)**
 - a. This newsletter would go out weekly or bi-weekly and would only have enrollment messaging, no other parent communication
 - b. Send to all current families, prospects, any parish families who aren’t enrolled in the school (get emails from Religious Ed at the parish)
 - c. Each week, include a video message from the principal or a teacher:
 - i. Include good results from the parent survey
 - ii. Unique ways teachers have continued to deliver excellence in education throughout the COVID-19 crisis
 - iii. Videos from kids about why they can’t wait to come back
 - iv. Message from the pastor on why Catholic education is so important
 - d. Include a link to the enrollment form on the school website.
7. **Launch a social media campaign: ‘Can’t wait to go back!’**
 - a. Use [free digital ads](#) to launch the campaign.
 - b. Create challenges that families can participate in via the comments on social sites. Entries would include photos, drawings, videos, etc. The theme is why they “Can’t wait to go back” to your school. Encourage families to like/share the posts and comments.
 - c. Have a “meme” contest for middle school/high schoolers to create funny “Can’t wait to go back” memes. (Make one or two rules about appropriateness and that memes must mention your school). Students would post the memes in the comment section on Fb or Instagram and the most “likes” would win a prize.
 - d. Use your social media as interactively as possible.
8. **Post consistently on all school social media platforms (and on pastor/priest platforms if available):**

- a. Video messages from the principal about how teaching is going (success stories)
 - b. Boosted posts for enrollment with link to online enrollment form.
 - c. Boosted posts for School-at-home Guide for Catholic Families ([FREE Resource](#))
 - d. Post or share messages from the bishop about the importance of Catholic schools and Catholic education
9. **Each week, run an ad for school enrollment in the bulletin** (if the bulletin still is being produced and mailed).