

Staff Phone Calls to Parishioners

(Suggested Script)

1. Introduce yourself

- a. Hi I ama staff member at _____ Catholic Church.
- b. We're reaching out to all our parishioners to check in and see how folks are doing during this unique time and to offer ways in which this experience can deepen our love of God and neighbor.
- c. We are trying to offer a ministry of presence to our community and to offer a listening ear to whoever we are able to connect with. We just want you to know that we care, that we are thinking about you and keeping you in our prayers. And mostly, we want you to know that you are not alone.
 - i. The passages of scripture that we've been praying over a lot lately come from the writings of St. Paul when he said, "In all things God works for the good of those who love him." That leads us to reach out to you and ask that you join us in prayer so that the Holy Spirit will help us know what is the Grace God intends for us in this moment and how is God wanting to bring about our salvation both individually and as a parish.
- d. Since we are unable to come together in community and prayer in Mass at this time, we just want to let you know some of the things we are doing that might help you feel more spiritually connected and grounded. (see Link for Lent at Home below)
 - i. It's actually providential that we are given this time alone during the 40 days of Lent so that we can use this time to deepen our relationship with God. We'd like to help you do that and these resources can be that help.
- e. It's our hope that our years of praying together in community to date has built up our strength and resilience so we can draw upon that now to help us through this difficult time. We know it may not feel this way to some at the moment, but God often draws closest to us in our struggles.
 - i. When this distress is over, God wants more than that we return to life as we were before. God wants us to have a new and more abundant life that's rooted in the knowledge of his love, mercy, and presence with us.
 - ii. Here at St. Louise, we want you to know the love, mercy and presence of God and so we want to be with you every way we can during this important time.
- f. Ask them if they would join you in prayer before you end your call. Lead them in whatever prayer is most appropriate given their concerns or requests.
 - i. A quick word search can be done with the attached digital file of a Catholic prayer book to find prayers that will speak to their particular concerns. You can then offer to send them that prayer by email message after your phone call so they can pray it at home. Feel free to send them the entire digital copy of the prayer book as well so they will have a resource for further consultation.
- g. We don't know how long this current situation will last but we hope to be able to celebrate public Masses again soon. We look forward to seeing you and praying with you once more with the parish community of _____. Hope you will join us as soon as we can gather around the Eucharist.

2. In the course of the conversation, if certain needs come up, make a note of them but don't make any promises to "fix" or meet their needs, we are strictly here to listen.
 - a. If the conversation goes in any direction that you feel uncomfortable or out of your element, here are a few compassionate responses or ways to redirect:
 - i. Acknowledge the struggle, validate the emotions:
 1. It sounds like you're feeling (.....repeat back whatever emotion they are expressing),
 2. Please know that you are not alone
 3. Our hope is that this is a temporary struggle that we'll all be able to get through together...
 4. Is there any specific need you have that you are having difficulty meeting? We are obviously not equipped to address every need of our parishioners, but if there are ones we can, we would like to try...(Need to be careful here not to over commit and under perform.
 5. Remember, the purpose of the call is to be present/listen.
 6. If their struggles or needs start to go beyond the scope of the call, simply redirect the conversation and refer them to the following resources....
 - a. Example: It sounds like your needs are a bit beyond the scope of this call, but I'd like to let you know what resources we are able to offer at this time....
3. Resources:
 - a. Link for Lent at Home
 - i. Live Streaming mass and stations of the cross
 - ii. Variety of links and information regarding prayer, music, study at home for all ages
 - b. St. Vincent de Paul: 425-214-5478 (Carol Cody)(food, rent, utility support)
 - c. NAMI Resource guide (support groups, information, etc)
 - d. Cathy Callans, cathy@stlouis.org, 425-440-1162, Licensed Mental Health Counselor available for free consultations.
 - e. Remind people that google has links to just about everything they may have questions about.
4. For people without online access
 - a. Church is open 9am – 5pm daily
 - i. We ask that you please observe social distancing, stay at home if ill, and follow all the other guidelines to help keep everyone safe
5. Ask if they would you like to receive follow up phone calls?