



DIOCESE OF LONDON

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18 August 2020

To: The Pastoral Teams, Business Administrators and Secretaries in the Diocese of London

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

Re: Annual Special Collections

During this extraordinary time since reopening our churches, we have all been assessing the effects of COVID-19 on our parishioners, our communities, and indeed on our society. Individuals, families and communities are facing grave hardships due to the lockdown and the continual need for physical distancing. Some companies have closed their doors permanently. Many of our parishioners and parishes are struggling to make ends meet, while others are able to meet their obligations.

To assist us during this time, the Senior Leadership Team and our diocesan Finance Council recommended ways by which parishes might have some relief from diocesan assessments and loan interest. In addition, all special collections were suspended. Yet, the needs of many are real and are, in fact, more desperate due to the fall-out of the pandemic. In other cases, recipients of our annual collections simply need support to keep their doors open. Parishes have been asking about these collections since they are able to contribute something to these good causes. In light of this, the Senior Leadership Team has proposed a way to move forward with the collections that would have normally been taken up during the time of the lockdown as well as in the autumn of each year.

The plan that is proposed for these collections is that no printed materials would be made or distributed. Instead, pulpit announcements and bulletin blurbs would be prepared. You will be asked to make an appeal for each collection when announcements are normally made at Sunday Masses. People would be asked to consider a donation and to bring it the next weekend to the Mass they attend or otherwise deliver it to their parish office. People would also be encouraged to donate on-line where possible. Instructions could be placed in your bulletins or on your websites.

Proposed dates for the collections are:

1. St. Peter's Seminary – Announced August 22/23; Collected August 29/30
2. Share Lent (Development and Peace) – Announced September 12/13; Collected September 19/20
3. Thanksgiving Appeal – Announced October 3/4; Collected October 10/11
4. Retired Priests' Pension Fund – Announced November 7/8; Collected November 14/15
5. World Mission Sunday – Announced January 30/31; Collected February 6/7

I give my support to this proposal and ask that you do the same. We cannot ask or expect the impossible from anyone, but we need to keep in mind the needs of those who have benefitted in the past from these special collections, and who continue to depend on our support.

May God bless your work for the sake of the people of God and for all in need.

Sincerely yours in Christ,

Most Rev. Ronald P. Fabbro, C.S.B.
Bishop of London