

May 13, 2020

An Open Letter to St. Padre Pio Parishioners

With the issues we as a society have been faced with during the Coronavirus outbreak, needless to say it has impacted the parishes of the Archdiocese, including our own.

Since the mandate of the 'Stay at home' was implemented the family life style has been challenged. There are some who have been either terminated from their employment, while others have been furloughed. Those who have lost their jobs have no choice except to apply for unemployment compensation. Those who have been furloughed have no guarantee once this virus 'settles down' as to whether the workforce of their employment will be able to afford to bring them back as a full time employee. These are the issues that put additional stress on families. Uncertainty has been the norm for many in this country and around the world.

In our parish, I would like to ask that you help us with our new 'giving' program the Archdiocese of San Antonio has implemented in all of our parishes. In the past, we have used a program called 'e-Processing', which many of you have elected to us, which reports your contributions.

Our new program is called "Give Central", which is a more user 'friendly'. I would like to request that those who are presently using the 'e-Processing' program for making their contributions, to consider switching to "Give Central" and use this program in lieu of the other. We can assist you in any way to help you with this, but it is up to you as the donor to feed in the information, such as name, etc., and designate the contributions according to the categories listed. One of the advantages is the service charge with the new program is much less than our present program. That is a savings in itself.

The other side of the 'coin', if those of you who use the envelope system would be willing to transition to this "Give Central" program, it would save us around \$9,000.00 a year, which is what it costs us annually for the mailing of the contribution envelopes. So with your help we could eliminate this cost altogether. In the long run it would be more beneficial for us if everyone would use this program. It would eliminate writing a check. However, if you wish to donate with 'cash' then you should continue to use the envelope system.

For those of you who have chosen to use a bank draft, that can remain as is. What we do when one uses either the 'on-line' or 'bank draft', is put you in an 'inactive' category which eliminates the monthly mailed envelopes being sent. You are still in our Parish Soft program.

We will be contacting those using the envelope system enclosing a check and see if you are willing to make this change to on-line giving through "Give Central".

One of the directives from the Pastoral Center is that each parish prepare their upcoming fiscal year budget with a 25% reduction in overall expenses. Our parish bookkeeper has done so, reflecting this request. I have sent a detailed financial report to the Parish Finance Committee for their review. Once the new budget is completed, we will have a meeting with the Finance

Committee. With that option we can make an application for a Loan Payment Modification Request, which would give us a three month reprieve from our current principle payment, only requiring that we pay the interest for those 90 days. I have sent a letter to Archbishop Gustavo asking his permission to complete the application form for the Loan Payment Modification Request, which will give 90 days to pay only our interest on our note. I have received his approval will submit this request to Broadway Bank of San Antonio. Since our final note payment is not until 2025, we can gradually make up payments on the principle. This should give us some cushion. At this time, we have been able to meet our monthly note payment without having to draw from our investment accounts.

We did receive the monies through the Payroll Payment Plan in the amount of some \$ 69,800.00. 75% percent is for salaries, and 25% for such items as utilities, telephone and related expenses. We have two months to exhaust these funds. The 75% will be used to reimburse our employees their back salary that was lost due to a reduction in our work week.

I have already instructed my staff that we are going to curtail our expenses for the time being. We need to make use of the resources we currently have on hand. Our staff is very creative, and I know they will support this decision.

Now that we have approval to celebrate public Masses, with outlined restrictions, we should be able to move forward, slowly and cautiously. And with time we can regain our regular standard contributions cash flow.

I thank those of you who have continued to support our parish in these difficult times. I realize some of you are not able to continue with your support to our parish until you find out how you will fair financially once you can return to work and begin to have an income that will support your needs.

I share this information with you to keep you abreast of the situation we are faced with as a parish community.

I ask for your prayers and ongoing support, so we as a parish can weather this 'storm' and come out stronger than ever.

Respectfully submitted,

**Rev. Msgr. Patrick J. Ragsdale
Pastor**