

telos SPECIAL TECH/FINANCE QUICKSTART GUIDE

This Tech/Finance QuickStart Guide is based on documents produced by the Telos Group of the Office of Vocations and Ministry at Hellenic College & Holy Cross School of Theology. This Tech/Finance QuickStart Guide is designed to give you a checklist of action items for local parish leadership in the areas of Technology, Finance and Stewardship.

- ANALYZE** your situation assuming a worst-case scenario which would include lost revenue from festivals, fundraisers, hall rentals, schools, etc.
- COMMUNICATE WITH VISION** in an inspiring and pastoral way. Avoid “sinking ship” communication. People give to vision and inspiration.
- USE VIRTUAL TOOLS FOR PARISHIONER ENGAGEMENT.** Using a smart phone and Facebook Live enables you to stream services with good quality. With some investment, a more sophisticated system could be installed. Parishioners need to see services taking place in their home parish. This maintains and strengthens their connection to their spiritual home.
- IMPLEMENT PROGRAMS FOR ONLINE GIVING.** An online stewardship giving program will serve the parish beyond the current crisis. Regular incremental giving makes it easier for members to give in larger annual amounts. Monthly or periodic giving also lends stability to parish cash flow, especially in the slower summer months.
- SUPPLEMENT ONLINE STEWARDSHIP WITH ADDITIONAL PROGRAMS.** Consider Light-a-Candle programs, text giving, and special categories of online giving to encourage additional gifts. A donation kiosk is a logical step when services are once again open to members.
- PUBLICIZE THE VARIOUS WAYS OF GIVING.** Use the parish website, e-list, social media and print communications to inform parishioners of the various ways to give to the church. Provide links with step-by-step guidance on how to enroll in the various online giving programs.
- COMMUNICATE** with parishioners about the ways in which the parish is dealing with the current crisis. Keep them informed of access to streaming and archived services. Clearly communicate when parishioners will be able to attend services in person.
- MANAGE YOUR CASH FLOW.** Once you have determined cash flow from you projections, calculate any shortfall and take measures to bridge the financial gap.
 - Apply for assistance and any available funding. Speed up collection of any amounts due to the parish such as past hall rental fees. Encourage those members that are able to submit stewardship donations in advance.
 - Work with vendors if necessary in order to delay payments.
 - Prioritize your expenses, especially the salaries of clergy, administrators and others who care for the church. They have families that depend on their salaries to make ends meet.
 - If the parish has debt, work with your bank to delay payment.
 - Seek efficiencies in all areas of church operations – conserve electricity, eliminate unnecessary services, postpone elective maintenance or improvements when possible.
- PREPARE A TEAM TO DEVELOP AND CARRY OUT A MAJOR GIFTS STRATEGY.** Individuals with varying spheres of influence can approach peers and friends who may be capable of making larger one-time gifts to the parish during this difficult time. It is important in this situation to communicate vision as well as short- and long-term plans to weather the crisis and continue serving parish membership and the community.

For additional information on each of these items, see the TELOS document titled “Telos POP: Don’t Run Out of Cash” and much more at www.telospop.org