

# Outreach Phone Calls to Households

## Scripts and Guidelines

### **Before Calling**

Remember: Be yourself when calling (not a prefabricated “canned” messenger). Also, be prepared to answer any questions or concerns that the parishioners may have in regard to what your Church is offering during this time (ie. Mass, Confession, Prayer, Book Studies, etc) Most importantly, do your best to personally be at peace - it really makes a difference. And have fun! It will make the experience more pleasant for you and those you call.

Prayer: Before calling each person, or at least before calling a list of people, pray to God and intercede on their behalf (we suggest a Hail Mary)

### **Phone Scripts**

There are many scenarios that may happen when you make a phone call. Although all of them cannot be predicted we have provided a script for the most common scenarios.

#### **Scenario #1 Parishioner Picks up the Phone**

The purpose of this script is to provide some structure for the phone call. It is not to be used verbatim.

CALLER: *“Hi, this is (Your Name) calling from (Your Church). Is (parishioner’s name) available?”*

Response: *“This is (parishioners name)”*

CALLER: “Hi (parishioner’s name) this is Brian Lee from St. Mary Church. How are you?”

Response: (The answer will be different in every case. If they have any questions, try to answer them as best you can. If you do not know the answer, please do not make it up. No information is better than wrong information. Simply let them know that you will find out and get back to them.

CALLER CONTINUED: *Fr. (name of pastor) recently sent you a letter. Did you receive that? (Here is also where you will want to find out some of the following information: Do they know what the Church is offering for community, prayer, and sacraments? Do they have any physical or spiritual needs that can be communicated to the priest and parish staff? Personally invite them to the Grand reopening events.)*

CALLER CONTINUED: *It has been a pleasure talking with you. Before I let you go would it be ok if I said a prayer with you right now*

*(pray for their intentions followed by an Our Father)*

*Once again, thank you for your time. We will be sure to keep you updated with what is happening at the parish. Is (say email on file) the best email for you? (If they said they did not get Fathers letter make sure you have the correct address) Thanks again and have a blessed day. Goodbye.”*

Now, wasn't that easy and FUN?

Record all the information you obtained and any general comments about the phone call before you go on to the next call. This will keep your phone calls and your written comments from getting muddled up.

There are some different outcomes to the above encounter that you may want to consider. First, your call may have interrupted a legitimate event. However, the person may be interested in hearing from you at a later time. Ask when a more appropriate time to call would be, then simply return the call during that time. There may be cases in which the parishioner does not wish to speak with you. Simply thank them and end the call.

## **Scenario #2 Voicemail**

The purpose of this script is to outline the important things you need to cover when making contact with an automated message machine. Much like the person-to-person encounter described above, this message has the same goals of checking in with the person, as well as showing true concern for any situations they might be dealing with.

CALLER: *“Hi (Parishioners name), this is (Your Name) calling from (Your Church). I’m calling to follow up on a letter Fr. (name of pastor) sent out recently. He wants to let you know that he is praying for you and hear how you are doing given the current circumstances. We also want to reassure you of the precautions we are taking as a parish so you can safely return to Mass and other parish activities. I’ll go ahead and leave you my name and number. (Name and number) and you are welcome to call back anytime if you have questions or concerns. Thanks again, and have a blessed day.”*

### **Scenario #3 Speaking with a relative/roommate**

The purpose of this script is to guide you through a phone conversation with the visitor’s relative or roommate. Our overall goals remain the same in this context.

CALLER: *“Is (Visitor’s name) available?”*

Response: *“No, he/she is not available.”*

CALLER: *“May I leave a message with you for him/her?”*

Response: *“Yes, you may.”*

CALLER: *“My name is (Your Name) calling from (Your Church). We were just calling to hear how they are doing given the current circumstances follow up on a letter they received from our parish.”*

Response: The relative/roommate may know the parishioner and have something to say. If they do:

- (1) Be aware that they too are a person that could be listened to and prayed with
- (2) If you have a conversation with them do not be afraid to ask them for their name along and any prayer intentions they may have
- (3) See if they have any questions
- (4) Inform them about what the Church is offering during this time
- (5) If they do not know the parishioner very well and seem disinterested in having a conversation, simply leave your name and number, thank them for their time, and end the call.

### **Guidelines**

As with any human contact, there may be unforeseen situations that come up. This is not something that should cause any apprehension. We have the Holy Spirit, and his peace, guidance, and favor are with us in whatever we do. Below are some general guidelines that callers may follow when calling visitors:

- \* Encourage, speaking the Word with love and faith.
- \* LISTEN - it is the most powerful communication tool!
- \* Communicate from your heart; be yourself.
- \* If the parishioner asks a question that you are unsure of, don't just make something up, or answer off the top of your head. Tell them you will find out the answer and get back to them.
- \* Do not counsel. This could lead to serious problems.
- \* Be aware of "church-bashing." Do not take part in negative conversation. This is not one of our goals and, furthermore, would prove to be counterproductive.
- \* Be sure to spend time in the Holy Spirit before making your calls. Expect to be a blessing and to be blessed.
- \* Document all calls before beginning a new one.
- \* Do not read the scripts. They are only structural outlines of what we foresee happening.
- \* Be led by the Holy Spirit.