MEMORANDUM

TO: Pastors and Administrators

FROM: Bettina Alonso

CC: The Reverend Monsignor Joseph LaMorte

DATE: December 8, 2020

SUBJECT: Online Engagement

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Dear Pastors and Administrators,

As we close 2020 and look forward to a new year, the Development team has started to launch The 2021 Cardinal’s Appeal. Last year, digital outreach became more critical to both stewarding parishioners as well as our fundraising efforts than ever, and I wanted to share some best practices to help you with The Cardinal’s Appeal and your overall parish digital efforts.

A good place to start is your parish website. Please take a few moments to review your website and ensure the information is up-to-date, specifically your mass schedule, any virtual events, and a prominent link to donate. With a second lockdown looming, your parish website will be the first destination for a parishioner to find livestreamed masses, religious education classes and materials, your social media pages, and online donation page.

Your social media pages should also be refreshed. Facebook will be the most likely place for your parishioners to search for information, so focus your social media efforts there. Confirm your parish Facebook page has an “About” section completed, with your website and phone number. This is a great place for your creativity to shine. Facebook (and its corporate sister, Instagram) have many tools that make it easy to host a virtual book club, broadcast a mini-homily, or start a bible study group. Think about these as an extension of the weekly bulletin and what elements of that paper publication would easily translate to this virtual space, including a call to give weekly or via The Cardinal’s Appeal. The more connected and informed your parishioners feel, the most responsive they will be to a call for action to increase their tithe or overall giving.

With all of these media, there are two critical elements to consider:

1. Please strive to keep these pages updated. No information is better than bad information.
2. In any online space, authenticity is key. You know your parishioners and what information will be appealing. If you have a teen group, ask them to do a “takeover” on Instagram (they’ll know what you are asking!) and create the posts for a specific Sunday. Do you have a fantastic choir? Or would a virtual rosary every Wednesday evening resonate? These are all opportunities to create connection and gather—virtually—in Jesus’ name.

As always Development is here to serve your needs. I would like to introduce you to Diana Paradis – feel free to schedule some time via your campaign manager or directly (diana.paradis@archny.org; call 914-980-5950) to discuss ideas, improvements and implementation.

God bless,

Bettina