

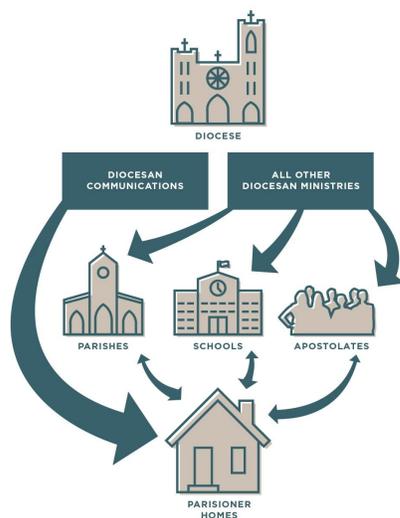
CONTENT EVANGELIST

WHITE PAPER

MARCH 2020

Communicate with the faithful, now more than ever

COVID-19 is having an impact on the entire world. It has affected the way we live and work — and even the way we worship. With people unable to participate in the Mass, they may be left feeling adrift from their faith and their spiritual lives. Now, more than ever, we need to remind them that they belong to the family of Jesus Christ and to the Church. Now is the most critical time for us to reach into parishioners' homes in the most effective way we can — with Catholic content sent directly to them.



In their strategy, the Archdiocese of Vancouver pointed out something crucial that is true for every diocese. Diocesan influence with Catholics is mostly indirect rather than direct. What do they mean? Well, dioceses do not have direct influence on the Mass experience, the quality of the preaching or music. The parish does. Dioceses do not have direct influence on the Catholic education experience, or what small groups provide, or other apostolates. Again, that is mostly the parish, or other Catholic organizations. Dioceses certainly have indirect influence through all the myriad diocesan ministries that support these things. But, they do not directly control many of these things.

Where do dioceses have demonstrable direct influence and connection with Catholics? Diocesan communications.

Communication only a diocese can provide

With diocesan communications, there is no intermediary at the parochial level. Diocesan communications can keep Catholics connected with their Catholic faith. They provide more than news and information; they also provide formation and inspiration. During this crisis, what is most critical is that the diocese has the ability to provide the only source of Catholic content directly into parishioner homes.

Unless the diocese publishes and mails a periodical, CARA (The Center for Applied Research in the Apostolate) indicates that nine out of 10 Catholics will have no Catholic content in their homes. Though most Catholics are on social media, CARA reports that only 4% of Catholics follow anything Catholic on Facebook. Only 4% ever go to a diocesan website. Only 5% listen to Catholic radio and only 7% of Catholics regularly watch Catholic television. The religious nonprofit marketing association says that religious email has an average open rate of only 18%. The only way for Catholic content to get into every Catholic home is for the diocese to publish and mail a periodical.

In the United States, 57 dioceses mail their publication to every Catholic home. When a diocese invests in communicating directly with parishioners, they provide the aircover that parishes need. Publications will help people reconnect with their parishes once the crisis is over. They can pave the way for Catholics to re-enter into the life of the Church, return to Mass, to school, to those small groups and apostolates. Catholic content in a diocesan publication reminds people that the Church's great work of prayer is still going on: that their priests continue to offer Mass for them, that those in consecrated life continue to pray

for their physical and spiritual health, and that all of us are united in our desire to come together again and be able to receive Christ in the Eucharist.

All of us at FAITH Catholic are here for you. FAITH is fully operational and is available to support you during this uncertain time, so please don't hesitate to contact me if you have questions or if you simply want insight about communicating through this crisis. In the meantime, please know of our prayers for your diocese and the whole Church as we all work to bring the healing message of Jesus Christ to a world in need.

Content available immediately from FAITH Catholic for diocesan publications

To support dioceses that need content for to respond this crisis, FAITH is offering these resources for print or digital publication:

- FREE TO USE: COVID-19 special Report: We have a special report on the crisis that includes how to make a spiritual communion. It could also include a pastoral response from you. Here is the report [LINK](#)
- FREE TO USE: Ad promoting parish online giving: Attached is a sample of an ad we have provided all editors to adapt for your diocese to encourage parishioners to go online and continue supporting their parish.
- Special issue or section: Easter Season At Home: A print-ready special section or stand-alone special edition to include your publication masthead, a message from your bishop, and ads directing people to your local televised Mass channel and/or parish online giving options.

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