**How to Implement Our Path Forward at Your Parish**

**Our Path Forward 2022**

From the beginning of September through the end of November, most parishes choose at least two weekends to implement an offertory program to build and strengthen offertory income. ***Our Path Forward, 2022***, was thoughtfully created by the Advancement Team for ease of use and implementation at your parish. This fall, with deep gratitude to parishioners and donors alike, we enter our Season of Giving.

**Kick-Off Email to introduce the Season of Giving and inspire participation**

To kick off the Season of Giving and introduce Our Path Forward, AOB will send an email to parishioners in mid-September. The parish may also choose to distribute the pastor letter (template provided). This letter can be mailed directly to parishioners, distributed on social media, placed in the bulletin or sent via flocknote.

**IMPLEMENTATION**

Steps to implement Our Path Forward with details for each weekend listed below:

Step 1: **CHOOSE** your Announcement and Commitment Weekends

Step 2: **COORDINATE** the timing of sharing your Annual Report/ State of the Parish prior to your Announcement Weekend.

Step 3: **CUSTOMIZE** templates provided by the Advancement Team for bulletin announcements, social media posts, email messages, Flocknotes, WhatsApp, etc.

Step 4: **PERSONALIZE** in-pew Announcement and Commitment Weekend Homily and Talking points provided by the Advancement Team. Speaking from the heart about how offertory impacts your parish is always most effective.

Step 5: **SHARE** with your parish on your Announcement and Commitment Weekends.

**ANNOUNCEMENT WEEKEND**

**Preparing for Week One**

Announcement Weekend provides an opportunity for you to share about your parish ministries, the tremendous good your parish does and for you to ask your parishioners to prayerfully consider increasing their contributions to the parish. Remember to focus on **“***Why should parishioners give to their parish?”* There are so many places competing for charitable gifts from your parishioners. Use week 1 to make your case on why their gift to the parish is appreciated and important.

**Step 1: Share Annual Report prior to Week 1**

Create an annual report / state of the parish and release it before implementing Our Path Forward. This can be done in many forms, from a pulpit announcement to a mailing. The overall goal is to give your parish members an accurate view of the parish financials and goals for the future. This can help build a case for support for increasing offertory donations.

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**Step 2: Prepare the Bulletin Announcement**

Download the pre-made bulletin text, make any needed changes and add it to your bulletin for Week 1. ​

**Step 3: Create Social Media Posts**

Download the pre-made social media post video, and upload it to your Facebook page and anywhere else you feel it’s appropriate. Post on Facebook the **Thursday before Week 1**.

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**Step 4: Create Email / Flocknote / WhatsApp Messaging**

Download the sample email text and create and send it on the **Thursday before Week 1**. ​Use this chance to make the email your own and share what you think is important for your parishioners to hear. If you did not already release an annual report this is a good opportunity to share with your parishioners the financials of the parish.

**Step 5: Sample Homily / Talking Points**

Download the sample Homily, make your changes and speak about Our Path Forward on **Week 1 during Mass**. The sample script is designed to give you some ideas and inspirations - feel free to make it your own.

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**COMMITMENT WEEKEND**

**Preparing for Week Two**

Week 2 is the commitment. It’s your chance to brag on your parish members, and thank them for all of the support, efforts and volunteering they do. Thank them for being faithful people and for their service. Once all the thanking is done, it’s time to give everyone a few minutes to fill out the commitment card online using their phone or by using the provided paper version. Try not to think about the commitment card as a task you need to get finished quickly so you can move on. Making a renewed commitment to the parish is a big deal! Parishioners are deciding what the parish community means to them and how they will provide financial support.

Week Two is similar to week one, with the added step of allowing your parishioners to fill out the commitment card online or the paper version.

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**Step 1: Prepare the Bulletin Announcement**

Just like week 1 you will need to download the pre-made bulletin text, make any needed changes and add it to your bulletin for week 2.

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**Step 2: Create Social Media Posts**

Download the pre-made social media video post, and upload it to your Facebook page and anywhere else you feel it’s appropriate. Post on Facebook the **Thursday before Week 2**.

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**Step 3: Create Email / Flocknote / WhatsApp** **Messaging**

Download the sample email text, and create and send the communications on **Thursday before Week 2**. ​

**Step 4: Sample Homily / Talking Points**

Download the sample Homily, make your changes and speak about Our Path Forward on **Week 2 during Mass.**

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**Walk through process of making commitment on Contactless Response Card or In-Pew Card**

**Contactless Response Card** [**https://www.opfaob.com/my-commitment**](https://www.opfaob.com/my-commitment)

This year, parishioners can respond on their phone. Familiarize yourself with the web address and fill out the form yourself, so you know the questions and the time it takes. Ask parishioners to take out their phone and fill out the response.

​**In-Pew card** - Place the printed In-pew card in the pews. Look over the card to understand the parts. The in pew card has a QR code, and web address on it that links to the online commitment form. If the parishioner is not comfortable with the online form, they can fill out the card itself, tear the response section off and place it in the offertory basket.

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**Remember:** *Your parishioners will need to time to respond. Give them a few minutes to fill out the Contactless Response Card. Have some music, use this time to pray. Make this an activity and not just something you need to get through!*

**FOLLOW-UP**

Saying thank you is vital. Remember to thank parishioners for their support after Commitment Weekend.

Your Regional Director will share responses for your parish with you from the digital commitment card. If parishioners indicated they would like to leave a legacy gift, your Regional Director will work with you to figure out the best way to engage with them.

**QR-CODE Stickers**

After you completed the commitment weekend, you can place the in-pew QR code stickers to the back of the pew. Your Regional Director will provide the stickers to you. The QR code will link directly to your parish-giving page.

Helpful Links:

[www.opfaob.com](http://www.opfaob.com/) - Parishioner website for Our Path Forward

[www.advancingourmission.org](http://www.advancingourmission.org/) - All the resources you need are located here under parish resources.