

To: All Parishes,

November 1, 2020

Greetings sisters and brothers in Christ. In these difficult times it is amazing to see how the parishes of the Diocese of Southern Ohio are pulling together, working to help those in need, and continuing in their worship and praise of God online and in-person. Truly, the Lord God Almighty reigns in the midst of this pandemic!

As we complete this calendar year, still in the midst of the pandemic, we, as a group committed to your financial welfare, have some suggestions as you continue to face usual, and difficult situations.

Paul told the Corinthians in Ch 16:1-2, "Now about the collection for God's people: Do what I told the Galatian churches to do. On the first day of the week, each one of you should set aside a sum of money in keeping with his income, saving it up, so that when I come no collections will have to be made."

What is Paul advising here? First, have a plan. It doesn't mean everything you plan will work out the way you want, but if you are planning, you can also adjust. We suggest parishes work toward having a 3-6 month supply of cash. You can't have enough cash on hand at this time of uncertainty. The parishes that have reserve funds are the ones who will survive this period of tribulation. Second, gather your finances and be prepared. Again, in the midst of this pandemic, tithes, pledges, certainly plate giving may be down, significantly. But, as Paul urges, begin now. In working through income and expenses, you may find your budget for this year is way out of whack. It will behoove you to put together a 2021 budget now so you can advise your congregation sooner rather than later, what is needed. Third, you may find you need an evolving budget. This is a good year for more than one budget – maybe two. Things are changing rapidly, so make adjustments, it may help to have your finance committee revise the budget quarterly. Yes, more work, but as Paul puts it....be prepared.

Some other things to consider:

- If you received a PPP loan, file for forgiveness of the loan with the US Govt.
- Review all contracts. Cancel those that you can if you are not utilizing them due to Covid, for example, parking. Renegotiate others. The Diocesan Finance Team can perhaps assist with this to get bulk discounts, for example software, copier, insurance etc. If there are things you can think of where we could get group discounts let us know and we will work on them.
- 2021 may not be a normal year, be prepared to review and adjust as needed.
- If possible, review your outreach budget, the need is high during these times.
- Some local governments may have funding available, review what's available.
- Review all your bills to ensure that you are not paying tax, everything adds up.

Know that we continue working as your representatives with the Diocese to aid and assist you in these difficult times. Should you have issues or questions, please don't hesitate to call on us.

Yours in Christ,

DSO Finance Committee