

Parish Phone Script

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)

The Phone Script

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.

Script:

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

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

CALLER: *“Great! Is this a good time? I am calling this afternoon/evening because Fr. (name of pastor) wants to let you know that he is praying for you and wants to know how you are doing given the current circumstances?”*

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. Here is also where you will want to find out some of the following information: How they are doing in general? Do they know about what the Church is offering for the community, prayer, and sacraments? Do they have any physical or spiritual needs that can be communicated to the priest and parish staff? Sometimes these questions will be answered within the conversation. Our main goal is not to extract information; our main goal is to let them know the Church is still praying for them and is there for them for any spiritual or physical needs. Try and be friendly and make the parishioner feel the love and peace of Christ during the call.

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

(say a prayer using ACTS method)

Once again, thank you for your time and remember to feel free to give me a call if any questions arise or you'd like to talk to someone. Thanks again and have a blessed day. Good bye."

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 visitor does not wish to speak with you. Simply thank them and end the call.

Scenario #2 Answering Machine

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.

Script:

“Leave a message...”

CALLER: “Hi, this is (Your Name) calling from (Your Church). This message is for (Visitor’s name). Fr. (name of pastor) wants to let you know that he is praying for you and wants to know how you are doing given the current circumstances. I also want to see if you knew about the online services we are offering, as well as answer any questions that you may have about what we are doing as a Church.” I’ll go ahead and leave you my name and number. (Name and number) and you are welcome to call back anytime. 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.

Script:

CALLER: “Hello, this is (Your Name) calling from (Your Church). 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: “As I mentioned, this is (Your Name) calling from (Your Church). We were just calling to hear how they are doing given the current circumstances.

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, 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

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.