



**DIOCESE OF MANCHESTER**  
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**To:** Pastors, Administrators, Parish Business Managers and Bookkeepers  
**From:** Mac Bryant, Finance Officer & Secretary for Temporalities  
**Date:** September 16, 2020  
**Subject:** Collections at Parishes

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You may have noticed that the updated *Celebration of Mass with a Congregation* document was sent via this Digest on September 9, 2020. According to this document, the requirement for parish collections in that document is stated as follows: Prepare a place(s) where collection envelopes/offerings may be safely deposited without interaction. As such, “passing of the basket” is still prohibited as it provides too much opportunity for spreading COVID 19.

While the “passing of the basket” is still prohibited, parishes may collect offertories using the baskets on the end of the poles, as long as they follow the requirements listed below to ensure such is conducted in a safe manner.

1. The ushers and the vast majority of attendees must be wearing masks. In other words, there must be a high compliance with the Bishop’s directive.
2. The ushers must sanitize their hands immediately before and immediately after the collection.
3. Anyone who touches the money/envelopes must sanitize their hands before and after they touch/move the money
4. The congregation should be instructed to just drop the money/envelope in the basket and not touch the basket, with a preference that they give offertory online.
5. Parents should not let their children put money or envelopes in the basket, without assistance to ensure that they do not touch the basket.
6. The basket and pole must be sanitized after each mass, including a cloth insert.
7. The ushers should not dally at any pew waiting, so as to minimize contact.
8. The ushers should not make people reach to the basket, causing them to be closer than 6’ to another person.

The ushers should be screened as with other employees/volunteers under the universal guidelines before they enter the church.

In addition, as mentioned in previous communications, electronic giving programs have been shown to systematically increase offertory giving. We, therefore, recommend that your parish promote the parish electronic giving program, with clear visibility on the parish website, and take steps to ensure that the electronic giving process is clear and user friendly. If you should have any questions about implementing or promoting your parish's electronic giving program, please contact Bevin Kennedy, Secretary for Development and Communications, at 663-0136 or [bkennedy@rcbm.org](mailto:bkennedy@rcbm.org)