



Church of Ireland Online Fundraising Options

Under current UK and Irish Government legislation church buildings have had to close their doors for normal congregational activities. In the space of a few short weeks our Churches have had to reinvent the way we worship and the way Clergy provide pastoral care imaginatively and appropriately while working from home. While our Church buildings may be closed, the Church is very much open and doing all it can in these challenging times.

This guidance is intended to highlight some of the options available online to raise Parish income as many Parishes find themselves with no weekly Church plate collections or parish fundraising cancelled as a result of Covid-19. The list below is not intended to be complete as there are an exhaustive list of possible solutions for online donations.

1. iDonate – operates anywhere in the world but only processes in Euros / Links to the Revenue for ROI charities operating the tax donation refund scheme <https://www.idonate.ie/>
2. Easy Payments Plus – operates in Ireland and is a division of Payzone <https://www.easypaymentsplus.com/AboutEpp>
3. Data Development – May be a good option for parishes using their accounting software <https://www.datadevelopments.co.uk/mygivingonline/>
4. Just Giving – operates in the UK only - <https://pages.justgiving.com/charities.html>
5. Go Fund Me –operates in both Ireland and UK – Crowdfunding- best suited to a single cause. <https://ie.gofundme.com/> Please note the GoFundMeCharity option within GoFundMe is not currently available outside the USA.

Criteria to consider when selecting software

- **Software features:** What features does the software provide? Can the website be customised to match your brand standards? What other capabilities does it have? Email communications?
- **Number of users:** How many people in your parish need to use the software?
- **Ease of use:** The system should be easy to use and provide flexibility to meet your parish needs from a parishioner perspective and from an administration perspective.
- **Pricing:** How much does it cost?
- **Resources & support:** Does the company include technical support. Some companies sell you on their low costs, but then charge you for customer service, support requests, etc.
- **Customer examples & testimonials:** Most established companies offer examples of fundraising websites to show how current customers are using their software as well as testimonials from satisfied customers. Check them out! Not only will you get a better idea if the software provider's services match your expectations, but you may also come across some great ideas!
- **Payment processing:** Some companies offer their own payment processing services that integrate seamlessly with their fundraising websites, and others let you choose your own preferred partner. Be sure to find out what options you have, and evaluate merchant services criteria (such as flexible terms, transaction rates, cost of equipment, etc.)