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Orthodox Metropolis of Korea issues announcement about the spread of the coronavirus

The Orthodox Metropolis of Korea has issued the following announcement about the spread of the coronavirus:

Due to the rapid spread of the coronavirus Covid-19 in our country, some people are asking if our churches will be open the next several Sundays. We, therefore, are contacting you once again to explain to you the following:

In every one of our churches, our priests will continue to pray the Divine Liturgy because the Sacrament of the Holy Eucharist is the most important prayer of our Orthodox Church.

At all times, but especially in times of crisis and severe social problems (wars, diseases, pestilences, famines, earthquakes, fire, floods, hurricanes, etc.), the Church prays for its faithful members and for the whole world.

Likewise, due to the current coronavirus threat, our Church must pray even more intensely. The Divine Liturgy will be offered for those who will be participating and for those who cannot participate because of some

reasonable causes.

“Remember, Lord, the people present here and those who are absent for reasonable causes and have mercy on us and on them according to your great mercy.” This prayer is recited immediately after the consecration of the Holy Gifts, every time we celebrate St. Basil’s Divine Liturgy.

Anyone who feels that their health is in danger from joining the Divine Liturgy because, e.g. they belong to some vulnerable social groups, or because they feel physically weak, or because the means of transportation they use to get to the church are dangerous to their health, and for any other reason, **they are free not to participate**.

During the time of the Divine Liturgy let them pray at home. As is well known, the primary concern of the Church is people’s health and wellbeing.

We entreat the Lord to protect you from all evil, to help overcome the virus problem in our country and around the world, and to bless us with a spiritually fruitful Great Lent.

February 28, 2020

From the Orthodox Metropolis of Korea