10/03/2020

Measures Taken by the Metropolis of Chicago for the Care of its Parishes and Neighbors

GREEK ORTHODOX ARCHDIOCESE OF AMERICA

METROPOLIS OF CHICAGO

To the priests, deacons, monastics and laity, the beloved children of the Holy Orthodox Metropolis of Chicago,

Grace, mercy, and peace of our Lord Jesus Christ be upon you.

The care of his flock is of primary concern to a Hierarch. Just as a loving parent or guardian would, the bishop is called to guide his flock closer to Christ and protect it from harm's way. It is in this spirit I wish to address the growing concern over the coronavirus outbreak.

As you may have seen last Friday, a Holy Eparchial Synod issued a statement, which included guidelines to be followed by the clergy concerning the coronavirus. We will work closely with our parishes for the speedy and effective implementation of the guidelines. Our churches are places of solace, safety and healing. As these are the very same attributes our faithful require in moments of uncertainty, the Metropolis of Chicago offers support to its parishes so they can continue to serve the faithful.

While public concerns continue to grow, I remind you that we are all children of God, and it is in God that our hope is grounded. Our Lord Jesus Christ not only works in ways that are beyond reason, He also works through each of us. We are each other's keepers; this is an opportunity not to retreat, but to exhibit the best of who we are through our love and care of each other.

If you haven’t done so, please also visit the webpage of the Centers of Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) dedicated to the coronavirus. Please find time to review the symptoms of the disease and know what to do if you suspect you are sick and understand the measures recommended to prevent its spread.

Should you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact us at and we will respond in a timely manner.

In Paternal love in Christ,



+ Metropolitan Nathanael of Chicago

Guidelines to be followed by the Clergy dealing with Covid-19 (Coronavirus), until further notice, based on the instructions of the US Center for Disease Control (CDC):

1) All parishes will provide stations in the Narthex and/or Nave for the Faithful to disinfect their hands as they enter the Church.

2) Signs will be posted at the entrance that recommend sick persons not attend the Services, but participate via television or the Internet (URL should be posted as well)

3) The clergy will not offer their hands to be reverenced and will refrain from touching the faithful either through handshakes or an embrace.

4) Signs will be posted recommending that honor be shown to Icons and the blessing cross by only bowing.

5) No books – Liturgical or Scriptural, will be kept in the pews. Parishioners will be instructed to bring their own books from home.

6) The Faithful will not receive the Antidoron from the Clergy, but on their own as they leave the church.

7) In the case of the use of flowers (Sunday of the Veneration of the Cross, Palm Sunday, Holy Friday), the Faithful will take them on their own as they leave the church. On Holy Wednesday (Holy Unction), each priest will anoint each Faithful using separate cotton-tipped swabs.

8) The Eucharist will be distributed as per usual.

9) In concelebrations, the clerical “Kiss of Peace” will be through bowing to one another. In parishes where the laity exchange the “Kiss of Peace,” they will avoid contact through bowing to one another.

10) After every service, all liturgical objects and surfaces to be thoroughly cleaned.
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