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# Urgent encyclical by Ecumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople regarding Covid-19 pandemic



As this Coronavirus crisis continues to spread and intensify on a global scale, the Ecumenical Patriarchate is monitoring the situation with an urgent sense of responsibility towards its faithful and all people without exception, and, following the Communiqué of 11 March 2020, upon deliberation of its Hierarchs in the City, announces the following:

1) The Ecumenical Patriarchate emphatically reiterates its appeal to everyone to limit their outings and travels to what is necessary, remaining in their homes for their own safety and the protection of the general public.

2) It commends the spirit of self-sacrifice demonstrated by those working in the field of healthcare and expresses its gratitude for their extraordinary and exhaustive efforts to assist those in need, as well as for the danger they knowingly risk by coming in contact with those infected by Covid-19.

3) It underlines the need for everyone to follow the decisions and instructions of the responsible health authorities for the sake of the common good.

4) In light of decisions already taken by some eparchies of the Ecumenical Throne, today we universally declare our ecclesiastical resolution and mandate to cease all divine services, events, and rites, with the exception of private prayer in churches that will remain open, until the end of March. This restriction will be later reassessed, in accordance with the development of the pandemic caused by the virus.

5) All Patriarchal and Stavropegial Monasteries will continue to hold regular divine services for their monastic communities, but outside pilgrims and visitors will not be permitted entry.

6) In the same framework, the Patriarchal Offices at the Phanar will remain closed until further notice, while the Ecumenical Patriarch and clergy of the Patriarchal Court will perform the prescribed divine services and pray for the whole world and for its speedy relief from this trial.

From the Chief Secretariatof the Holy and Sacred Synod

Phanar, 18 March 2020