21/03/2020

A personal message by His Eminence Archbishop Sotirios of Canada



My Blessed and Beloved Christians,

Only God knows why we are going through this grave tribulation of the coronavirus. Perhaps because of the unfaithfulness of the world. Perhaps on account of our own little faith. Let us not dwell on this. We will leave it in God's hands.

As long as we remain in this unfortunate situation, you are all aware that I have sent an Encyclical and the first thing that I have asked is for us to respect the directives of the government authorities. But more than that, I want to add a few more things.

Seniors over 65, and all those with health problems, should, as directed by the Canadian public health authorities, remain home for as long as possible until this affliction passes. And on Sundays and Feast Days, I ask seniors and those whose health is vulnerable to stay home and watch the Divine Liturgy and other Church Services on their televisions. Do your best to pray sincerely during this time. As for

Holy Communion, you should receive Holy Communion with caution, even if only once from now until Easter.

During this period, the Church prescribes a fast, the fast of Great Lent. Because we are dealing with this coronavirus affliction, I ask again for seniors and those who are vulnerable to follow the advice of their doctors. God is our Father and He does not want the premature death of His children. God Himself says that He does not want even the sinner to die.

Neither God nor the saints will be angry if, during this ordeal, you do not kiss icons or the hand of your priest.

Of course, it is necessary for all of us to abide by the basic rules of hygiene, especially the highest standards of cleanliness. Greeks are famous for our neatness and tidiness. Now that we are going through this process, let us do what we know best.

My beloved Christians, I have been your Bishop and father for 46 years. I believe that I have never asked for something unreasonable from you. And what I ask of you now, not only do I believe that it is sensible, but I also believe that it is God's will. In the Lord's Prayer, we say "Your will be done." Let us now also do God's will with humility, reverence and obedience. God will reward us with His grace, prosperity and a healthy life here on earth, but He will also embrace us in paradise.

With fatherly love and heartfelt prayers
to Christ for each and every one of you and for this tribulation to pass

ARCHBISHOP SOTIRIOS
GREEK ORTHODOX ARCHDIOCESE OF CANADA

— Source: gometropolis.org