21/03/2020

His Eminence Archbishop Sotirios of Canada issues his 2nd Encyclical regarding coronavirus outbreak



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Reverend Fathers, Honorable Presidents and Esteemed Members
of the Boards of Directors of the Communities of the
Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of Canada

Beloved in the Lord,

In my Encyclical dated 13/03/2020 on the issue of the coronavirus, the

first paragraph stated: “Our Greek Orthodox Archdiocese and its Communities will precisely observe the directives and instructions of the Canadian government authorities.” So far, we have done exactly that. Now, the orders and instructions of the Canadian authorities have been revised, and the number of faithful in churches cannot exceed fifty (50). Again, we will follow the instructions of the Canadian authorities, as they are issued for the benefit of all.

Church Services and Divine Liturgies will be conducted normally, but only fifty (50) persons will be allowed to attend each of the Services and Divine Liturgies. Everyone is requested and encouraged to follow Church Services and Divine Liturgies on television, on the radio and through other social media platforms. If the Canadian authorities proceed to give additional instructions, we will again respect them.

Our Churches will not close. In any eventuality, instructions and directives will be issued by the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese and no one else. It would be prudent for some hasty parish priests and community presidents – very few, perhaps two to three – to stop acting as if they were ‘the responsible leaders’ of the Church in Canada. In case of further changes, everyone should expect instructions from the Archdiocese.

Church Services and Divine Liturgies will be conducted properly, even if we get to the point that they are conducted only by the priest, the chanter and the sexton. As was mentioned above, appropriate instructions will be issued by the Archdiocese in any eventuality.

I kindly ask everyone – priests, councils, and devout Christians – to intensify their prayers so that we can get through the problem of the coronavirus. Let us all go though the remaining part of Great Lent with faith in God, unceasing prayer and sincere repentance. Happy Easter.

With fatherly love and warm wishes,

ARCHBISHOP SOTIRIOS

GREEK ORTHODOX ARCHDIOCESE OF CANADA