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His Eminence Archbishop Sotirios of Canada issues his 3rd Encyclical regarding coronavirus outbreak



His Eminence Archbishop Sotirios of Canada has released his 3rd Encyclical regarding the coronavirus outbreak. Read the full text below:

March 20, 2020

Reverend Fathers, Honourable Presidents and Esteemed Members of the Boards of Directors, Members of the Philoptochos Societies, Teachers, Students and Youth Members of the Communities, and to the Entire Plenitude of the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of Canada

Beloved in the Lord,

In my Encyclical dated March 13, 2020 on the issue of the coronavirus, I stated that: “Our Greek Orthodox Archdiocese and its Communities will precisely observe the directives and instructions of the Canadian government authorities.”

Nothing seems to have changed on the part of the Canadian authorities. But our conduct and that of our Christians have changed. The Canadian authorities have directed seniors over 65 and persons with health problems not to leave their homes. This is not being respected by our pious elderly Christians. It also appears that the instruction for the Priests and the Community Councils to limit Church attendance to no more than fifty (50) persons is not being respected. For these reasons, we are forced to resort to the final measure, which will be enforced.

From this point forward, all of our Church Services and Divine Liturgies will be conducted in Church behind closed doors by the priest, the chanter and the sexton.

No Church Service or Divine Liturgy can be omitted for two main reasons:

a) In order to praise and glorify the Thrice-Holy God; and

b) For Church Services and Divine Liturgies to be streamed online through social media so that pious Christians can follow and pray along.

In this way, we are given the opportunity to make our home and our family a “church that is in our house,” as the Apostle Paul conveys. Please let us all try to truly make our home a “church that is in our house.”

I wish and pray that the Almighty God will soon help us overcome this ordeal. We, in turn, will all try to strictly apply the instructions of the government authorities. Our life, from morning to night, should be a continuous and uninterrupted prayer.

With fatherly love and blessings,
ARCHBISHOP SOTIRIOS
GREEK ORTHODOX ARCHDIOCESE OF CANADA