24/03/2020

Greek Orthodox Metropolis of New Zealand issues update regarding religious services during the COVID-19 outbreak

The Greek Orthodox Metropolis of New Zealand has issued an update regarding religious services during the COVID-19 outbreak. Read the full

announcement below:

Wellington 23th of March 2020
To : the Clergy, the Monastic Brotherhoods and Sisterhoods and the reverent plentitude of the Holy Metropolis of New Zealand

Beloved siblings and children in the Lord,
We are all witnesses to the never seen before events occurring worldwide, as a result of the coronavirus COVID-19 outbreak. We are living through an unprecedented situation, and extraordinary emergency response measures are being implemented by all governments and international organisations (UN, WHO, etc.)

With a sense of pastoral responsibility, and love in Christ, our Ecumenical Patriarchate, the mother of all Orthodox Churches, decided and authorized the suspension of all religious services, functions and ceremonies, until March 31, 2020 in all the Churches under its jurisdiction.

Additionally, the Prime Minister of New Zealand announced the implementation of additional precautionary measures against coronavirus calling for avoidance of public gatherings and requesting from everyone to stay at home for a minimum of four weeks.

Therefore, all the Greek Orthodox Churches of the Holy Metropolis of New Zealand will have to remain closed to the public for a month.

The Divine Liturgies and Divine Services, the service of the Salutations to the Theotokos, Lenten Liturgies and Easter Liturgies will be held by the Priests and a chanter only, without the physical presence of the pilgrims.

The greatest enemy in these times is not the disease, but panic. In these challenging times we should all remain calm and follow advice given by the authorities and specialists, bearing in mind as people of God that apart from diseases, threats, viruses and germs, the existence and protection of God, Theotokos and the Saints, are always beside us.

His constant presence and protection we all ask through our prayers “united with one voice and one heart” from the Creator of the universe, during these challenging times for the humanity.

With prayers and the love of Christ
The Metropolitan

+Myron of New Zealand