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Metropolitan of Zambia refers to strict precautions in place amid coronavirus pandemic



The Metropolitan of Zambia, His Eminence Ioannis, this week called on the faithful to strictly follow public health officials' guidelines and precautions to limit the spread of the coronavirus. His Eminence also cited a decision by the Pope and Patriarch of Alexandria and All Africa, His Divine Beatitude Theodoros II, to close parishes under the Patriarchate's jurisdiction to worshippers.

Read the Metropolitan's message below:

> My dear Orthodox Christian Brothers,
> The world faces a global threat, which does not recognise borders and discriminations. The outbreak of the New Corona Virus (Covid-19) pandemic has already claimed the lives of tens of thousands of people worldwide. A few days ago, the Minister of Health Mr. Chitalu Chilufya

and His Excellency the Republican President Dr. Edgar Chagwa Lungu announced several preventive measures for the protection of the people of Zambia from this pandemic. Our reaction at both collective and personal level must be direct in order to avoid the catastrophic consequences of the Covid-19. Therefore, we have to closely follow the guidelines declared by the national and health authorities of Zambia, as preventive measures for the protection of public health.

At the suggestion of His Beatitude the Pope and Patriarch of Alexandria and All Africa Theodoros II concerning the compliance of national measures, we hereby announce that beginning on Monday, March 30th, all churches of the Orthodox Archdiocese of Zambia will remain closed to the public, until further notice. In case of emergency, contact the Archbishop or the priests of the Churches.

I recognise that these measures will affect the Christian life of our people, but believe me, they are undertaken for our common good.

Let’s pray together, in thses trying moments for humankind as a whole and let’s be close to our families.

I wish the Lord will protect us from this pandemic, will cure treat persons and will strengthen the medical and nursing staff.

I call each and everyone of us to make his place a worship place.

With paternal prayers and blessing in Christ.

+Archbishop of Zambia Ioannis