10/04/2020

H.E. Metropolitan Evangelos of New Jersey issues Archpastoral Message: Supporting one another



His Eminence Metropolitan Evangelos of New Jersey has issued an Archpastoral Message. Read the full text down below:

April 9, 2020
To the
Devout Orthodox Christians of the Parishes/Ecclesiastical Communities of the

Greek Orthodox Metropolis of New Jersey

My Beloved in the Lord,

As our Nation, our Holy Orthodox Church, our Metropolis and local Parish Communities, and the world continue to confront the challenging effects of COVID-19,
I pray this letter finds you all well and in good health.

During these most difficult times we are called, as Orthodox Christians, to project faith, hope, and courage in the face of the fear and panic pervading society. We cannot ignore the challenges presented by the existence and spread of the Coronavirus. The opposite is more fitting. We must increase our prayers of supplication, our compassion to help one another, and our trust in God who is the Physician of our souls and bodies.

Faith is the means by which we shall overcome the ferocity of this virus which regretfully has claimed the lives of thousands of people and has infected many thousands more who are physically and spiritually ailing as a result of it. Please be mindful though, that our Faith in Christ and His Gospel will strengthen us and guide us to everlasting life. Please remind yourselves of our Lord's teachings and especially, that, "He who believes in me, as the Scripture has said, 'Out of his heart shall flow rivers of living water'" (John 7:38). Therefore, let us prioritize and put our faith in Christ at the forefront of our existence. It is faith which relieves our pain; directs our path; cures our spiritual illnesses; reinforces the resilient; consoles the downtrodden; and makes known in time the mystery of God's Providence.

Faith is needed now more than ever, especially now, as our nation and the world contend with the fallout of this pandemic. Countless individuals are prevented living their daily lives, from going to work which has resulted in the increase of unemployment, and this, no doubt, will cause some families to have serious concerns about their own financial security. This is when it becomes crucial for us, as a Community of Orthodox Christians, to help and support one another so that we may endure these struggles together. Undoubtedly, the economic effects of this pandemic will also affect our Church, our Metropolis, and our local Parish Communities. Nevertheless, just as we are cognizant of our personal needs as individuals, we must also remain conscientious of our

Church's, Metropolis and local Communities' needs. Therefore, I paternally appeal to you that you continue to support your local Parish Community during these critical times, and especially during these sacred days when we will experience the Sacred Passion, the Cross, the Burial, and ultimately the Divine Resurrection of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, virtually, yet, lively in our hearts and minds.

Although you are not able physically to attend and participate in the Liturgical life of the Church and your Parish, to light a candle for the health of your family, your loved ones, or to pray for the repose of the soul of your departed family and friends; although you are not being able to personally offer your stewardship, I humbly ask that you please offer your contributions by other means to your local Parish/Community, so as to ensure that when our Parishes are permitted to receive the faithful once again, the Parish Communities will be ready to continue its ministry and to serve you and your families, and so that we all may begin the spiritual healing process together.

My beloved, Christ's Church will always be the ultimate source of hope in times of distress and comfort during times of tribulation. Though these difficulties will be harsh over the next days and weeks ahead, we must remember to have faith and remain strong during these trials and tribulations which, with the Grace of God, will pass. When this virus will eventually be controlled, God willing soon, we will once again gather together in our local Parish/Communities, in your own Parish House of Worship, so that you may give glory to God who has blessed you with life and health to once again enter His Holy House saying, "O Lord, I love the beauty of your house, and the place where your glory dwells" (Ps. 26:8).

I pray that our loving Lord, the Physician of our souls and bodies, through the intercessions of His most Holy Mother, the Theotokos and all the Saints, protects and guides you during these turbulent times. With these thoughts and my unceasing prayers on your behalf and all the people of the world, I remain

With Paternal Love and Blessings,

† E V A N G E L O S
Metropolitan of New Jersey