

Greek Orthodox Metropolis of Boston : An Update Regarding the Reopening of Our Churches



To the Reverend Clergy and Parish Councils of the Metropolis of Boston

Dear Brethren in the Household of the Lord,

Christos Anesti! Christ Is Risen!

As we have reached Mid-Pentecost and continue in the Paschal celebration, I pray that you and your families are well and healthy!

As you know, Massachusetts Governor Baker announced this morning that Churches are permitted to reopen in the Commonwealth at a 40% capacity rate, as part of the Phase-One Reopening plan. In light of this order, I ask our clergy and parish council leaders to begin to make immediate necessary plans to prepare our church buildings to be ready to welcome our faithful back for liturgical worship. We are also currently receiving the official governmental reopening orders for the other New England states.

With the reopening protocols that will be announced in each state during the next several days and weeks, it is imperative that each of our 62 Metropolis Parishes begin to plan proper safety procedures to execute a safe and orderly process in accordance with the state and local governmental directives. Please note the following suggestions as you organize your parish procedures:

The Parish Priest and Parish Council should begin to meet and put a parish safety plan into effect.

Seek the guidance and input from medical workers within the parish to participate in the formation of the parish safety and health plan.

Seek the advice of the parish legal counsel to review and advise on the parish safety plan.

Review the Safety Standards published by state and local governmental agencies, as well as the attached information prepared by the Assembly of Orthodox Bishops. (See attached link).

WHEN can our parishes open?

If a parish, after careful and deliberate preparation, considers that they are able to meet all of the State and Local guidelines, they may begin to open their doors as early as this coming Sunday, May 24. The majority of our parishes, however, may well need more time to prepare, and may choose Sunday, May 31, or even June 7, the Feast of Pentecost, as the date for their reopening.

Parishes should not resume public worship before they are ready, and the decision to delay the reopening may very well be the best decision for a particular community. No matter what the start date, no parish should open its doors for public worship unless they can do it safely, and in compliance with the guidelines.

PLEASE NOTE: Some Communities, including the cities of Boston and Somerville, may have local municipal orders that are stricter than those of the state, which MUST be respected.

If you have specific questions, concerns or information you would like to share, please contact the Chancellor directly.

May the Light of our Lord's Resurrection guide our steps as we prepare to reopen our churches to welcome our faithful back into the pews to join together in liturgical worship.

With Archpastoral Love,
+ M E T H O D I O S
Metropolitan of Boston

boston.goarch.org