

## **His Eminence Archbishop Makarios of Australia : To the faithful of the State of Victoria**



In light of the increasing number of outbreaks of Covid-19 cases in metropolitan Melbourne and all of Victoria, I urge all Greeks, but also our fellow people more broadly, not to become disillusioned, not to lose courage and hope in God, and primarily not to stop praying. When a person prays, they find themselves in open dialogue with God, and it is as though heaven descends upon earth.

Moreover, I call upon all our fellow citizens to respect and to comply with the recent guidelines which have been issued by the Victorian State Government, especially those concerning the new restrictions relating to Church attendance.

More specifically, I ask that our faithful limit their interactions with others; that they wear protective masks; that they seek testing if required, and that they do not to attend any event where many people gather. It is for this reason, that we have already given instructions in relation to Churches remaining closed for public worship as a means of abating the spread of the Coronavirus. This measure ensures that the entire community remains safe and protected; and that we do not inadvertently become the source of any community outbreak. Thankfully, many Churches have now established a means for virtual connectivity and details relating

to the streaming of Services can be found on the respective Parish/Community websites and Facebook sites.

It is with much pain of soul that we follow the developments at St Basil's Homes for the Aged of our Holy Archdiocese, together with all other Institutions of Melbourne and the broader region which are encountering cases in Coronavirus. We call upon all employees, all those who are implicated and primarily the relatives of those with the illness, to show understanding and to support the administration of the respective Institutions. We are certain that no one is pleased with this situation, no one rejoices in the spread of the pandemic. We are all striving to do that which is best.

The Archdiocese will continue to remain vigilant in monitoring the situation on a daily basis and, in cooperation with the Governing Authorities, the Archdiocesan Vicars in Victoria and the priests, will directly communicate any changes as soon as they are received. We especially ask that you continue to show caution, fellowship, unity, understanding, love and most certainly your trust in the local Church, the Holy Archdiocese of Australia.

We will continue to pray to our loving Lord asking that He may provide His loving mercy, that He may strengthen us with His love and protect us with His care.