



GREEK ORTHODOX METROPOLIS OF NEW JERSEY

ΙΕΡΑ ΜΗΤΡΟΠΟΛΙΣ ΝΕΑΣ ΙΕΡΣΕΗΣ

March 18, 2020

To the Very Reverend and Reverend Clergy
Of the Greek Orthodox Metropolis of New Jersey

My Beloved,

I pray this letter finds you well physically and spiritually as we continue our Spiritual Journey through Great and Holy Lent.

Per the decision of the Holy and Sacred Synod of the Ecumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople, as a result of the Coronavirus (COVID-19) Pandemic that is afflicting the entire world, all Liturgical Services in the parishes of the Greek Orthodox Metropolis of New Jersey are hereby cancelled through at least March 29, 2020. Thereafter, based on the status of the Pandemic a new directive will be issued in regards to the future celebration of the Divine Services.

Praying that our merciful Lord, the healer of our souls and bodies, continues to bless and protect you and the devout faithful during this most trying time, I remain

With Paternal Love and Blessings,

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

ECUMENICAL PATRIARCHATE

Communiqué

As this Coronavirus crisis continues to spread and intensify on a global scale, the Ecumenical Patriarchate is monitoring the situation with an urgent sense of responsibility towards its faithful and all people without exception, and, following the Communiqué of 11 March 2020, upon deliberation of its Hierarchs in the City, announces the following:

- 1) The Ecumenical Patriarchate emphatically reiterates its appeal to everyone to limit their outings and travels to what is necessary, remaining in their homes for their own safety and the protection of the general public.
- 2) It commends the spirit of self-sacrifice demonstrated by those working in the field of healthcare and expresses its gratitude for their extraordinary and exhaustive efforts to assist those in need, as well as for the danger they knowingly risk by coming in contact with those infected by Covid-19.
- 3) It underlines the need for everyone to follow the decisions and instructions of the responsible health authorities for the sake of the common good.
- 4) In light of decisions already taken by some eparchies of the Ecumenical Throne, today we universally declare our ecclesiastical resolution and mandate to cease all divine services, events, and rites, with the exception of private prayer in churches that will remain open, until the end of March. This restriction will be later reassessed, in accordance with the development of the pandemic caused by the virus.
- 5) All Patriarchal and Stavropegial Monasteries will continue to hold regular divine services for their monastic communities, but outside pilgrims and visitors will not be permitted entry.
- 6) In the same framework, the Patriarchal Offices at the Phanar will remain closed until further notice, while the Ecumenical Patriarch and clergy of the Patriarchal Court will perform the prescribed divine services and pray for the whole world and for its speedy relief from this trial.

From the Chief Secretariat
of the Holy and Sacred Synod

Phanar, 18 March 2020