



Bishop's Office

Prot. 72/2020

Montreal, March 14th, 2020

Subject: Preventive measures against the COVID-19 in Canada – Calgary.

Reverend Father Michel,

May the peace of our Lord be with you.

After the development we are witnessing regarding the Coronavirus which is escalating, and in line with the decision of the Diocese of Calgary to cancel all masses and prayers on Saturdays and Sundays until further notice keeping for now daily masses and reduced activities, I urge you to abide by this decision and to cancel, as well, all activities including the “Stations of the Cross”, catechism classes, preparation sessions for the first communion, Arabic language school, scout groups, community meetings, as well, and spiritual movements and youth gatherings.

I, as well, urge you to abide by the following preventive directives during the celebration of the daily Masses, (with small groups):

- Exchanging of peace with salutation.
- Cleansing the hands of offering carriers with an effective sanitizer before handing them out.
- Distributing Communion in hand mandatory until the end of crisis.
- Reducing use of ritual books in the hands of the faithful as much as possible.
- Emptying the Holy Water dispensers.
- Sterilizing places and utensils periodically.
- Inviting people who suffer from any sickness symptoms to avoid coming to church for the safety of all (Every faithful that feels any pathological symptoms related to the virus is exempt from the conscientious obligation to participate in the Divine Liturgy or any other parish group prayer.

I also remind you of the important basic precautions brought previously to your attention, including the following:

For priests and altar servants:

- Wash hands thoroughly with soap and water, or use an effective sanitizer in the same way before Mass.

- Avoid taking communion from the same cup and avoid drinking from it, rather do it by "dipping" (Intinction).
- Cleansing hands before and after the distribution of communion with an effective cleanser (before the eyes of believers).

Generally:

- Encourage those around you (believers, employees, etc.) to wash hands frequently.
- Avoid touching the face with the hand.
- Cough and sneeze in the elbow.
- Avoid shaking hands.

I ask God that this tribulation passes quickly and thus return to our regular pastoral activities. I invite all of our children to pray for the sick and for the victims wounded families, while invoking the Lord to protect us all.

Be reassured of my prayers and best wishes.

Sincerely,

