



SYRO-MALABAR CATHOLIC EPARCHY OF MISSISSAUGA

For the Glory of God

Circular

Port. No. 27/2020

March 21, 2020

COVID -19 Update # 3

My dear brothers and sisters in Jesus Christ,

I wish to provide you with a further update on our response as Christian community as we face the threat of COVID -19 pandemic. Many provinces in Canada have declared a state of emergency. The levels of anxiety and fear have increased in many provinces. Although the risk of infection remains slow in certain provinces, we believe it is best to act from an abundance of caution and implement all possible measures of prevention

After a careful discernment and considering directives from all levels of government, and with reference to the decisions of other dioceses, I decree that the following be implemented in all the parishes and missions of the Eparchy of Mississauga:

1. The public celebration of Holy Qurbana on Sundays and weekdays is cancelled until further notice.
2. Recognizing that the Eucharist is the source and summit of our spiritual life, on Sundays and weekdays priests will celebrate Holy Qurbana privately for the intention of the faithful and you will be able to participate via livestream. In addition, Holy Qurbana will be offered everyday at 10.00 am and 7.30 pm at St. Alphonsa Cathedral, Mississauga which will be available in **Face Book: Alphonsa Cathedral Mississauga** and in **YouTube: Holy Mass @ 10.00 am in Cathedral**. I will officiate the Holy Qurbana at 10.00 am, as far as possible.
3. Baptisms, funerals and weddings should be strictly limited in size, with immediate family only; and at the same time, keeping in mind all government limitation on group size, travel restrictions, social distancing, at-risk groups etc.
4. Pastors are asked to arrange for private confessions ensuring all health and safety guidelines of the government.
5. Only essential meetings in parishes and missions are to take place and holding such meetings electronically should be encouraged.

6. Information regarding Holy Week celebrations, Sacramental preparation, Chrism Mass, First Holy Communion and Confirmation etc. will be communicated later.
7. As mentioned last weekend, I strongly encourage you to focus on spiritual empowerment during this difficult period of COVID -19. We have declared a spiritual warfare against this pandemic from March 15 to April 19, the Sunday of Divine Mercy. Let's make our home a real 'domestic church' with online Qurnaba, family rosary, Scripture reading, Stations of the Cross, the Divine Mercy Chaplet etc. This is also a time to contemplate on the brevity of our life and of our own mortality. I am deeply grateful to notice that our priests, sisters and lay faithful have taken this spiritual warfare into their hearts. Our Risen Lord will listen to our prayers and reward abundantly.
8. Help the Needy: In this challenging time, it is as important as ever for the Church to be closer to the People of God, especially to the needy. St. Paul reminds, "Let us not grow weary in well-doing, for in due season we shall reap, if we not lose heart" (Galatians 6:9).
9. Today the Eparchy of Mississauga convoked an emergency Pastoral Council meeting via zoom and assessed the gravity of the issues related to COVID-19 and took appropriate decisions on this challenging situation. Each parish has decided to create a Crisis Management Team under the leadership of the pastor to stop spreading of this pandemic and support all those who are facing hardship as a result of COVID-19 outbreak. The existing Parish Council, if necessary, can take up this special role. The diocesan level core group of the Crisis Management Team has been set up with experts and volunteers for these important tasks. I cordially encourage you all to become part of this "Good Samaritan" initiative.

Do not be afraid. The Lord is never be absent. Let's continue to care for ourselves and one another. The 'Resurrection' is awaiting.

Yours in Christ,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Mar Jose Kalluvelil', with a small cross symbol to the left.

Mar Jose Kalluvelil
Bishop of Mississauga