



SYRO-MALABAR CATHOLIC EPARCHY OF MISSISSAUGA

For the Glory of God

Prot. No. 23/2020

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Statement from Bishop Jose Kalluvilil on Liturgical Implications Considering the Coronavirus (COVID-19)

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

May the Lord give you peace!

The threat of the Coronavirus (COVID-19) has prompted many governments, institutions and dioceses to issue precautionary guidelines as this virus has rapidly spread to many countries. The following recommendations are believed to be proportionate to the current understanding of the coronavirus and the risks outlined by health authorities. They are consistent with the Catholic Church's prerogative to protect those who are most vulnerable.

- Individual should consider their own health, including any potential to infect others with a contagious disease before attending a public liturgical celebration.
- People with serious cold or other illness are advised to stay at home.
- Holy Water should be temporarily removed from stoups at the doors of churches to reduce the possibility of transmission of the virus. Holy Water to be available for people to take home.
- When exchanging the Sign of Peace, individual should avoid shaking hands but say "Peace be with you" and offer a smile, nod or bow.
- The coronavirus is easily spread through saliva. In celebration of Holy Qurbana, it is there fore recommended that the Body of Christ only be administered in the hand because of the high risk of transmission if people continue to receive on the tongue.
- All ministers of Holy Communion should take particular care to wash their hands before and after distributing. They should seek to avoid contact with the communicant's hands.
- The faithful who are too unwell to attend Sunday Mass- Whether due to coronavirus or some other condition or are at particular risk of contracting the COVID-19 virus can honor their Sunday obligation by participating in a time of prayer within the home, reading the Scriptures or watching Mass on television
- Parish Priests, Chaplains and other Church leaders are encouraged to communicate their relevant advice with the faithful clearly and appropriately.

This advice should be considered alongside local Church and national health guidance, including from the Commonwealth Department of Health.

Yours in Christ,

+ Mar Jose Kalluvilil
Bishop of Mississauga

