



A GOOD WORD—Λόγον Αγαθόν

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER OF THE
GREEK ORTHODOX METROPOLIS OF PITTSBURGH

ISSUE 30 — APRIL 2020



HIS EMINENCE'S PASTORAL MESSAGE REGARDING THE PANDEMIC

We are hard-pressed on every side, yet not crushed; we are perplexed, but not in despair; persecuted, but not forsaken; struck down, but not destroyed— always carrying about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life of Jesus also may be manifested in our body. (St. Paul's 2nd Letter to the Corinthians, 4:8-10.)

These words of the Holy Apostle Paul speak as forcefully to the Church throughout the world today as they did to the Christian community at Corinth to which they were initially addressed two thousand years ago. The specific trials may differ across time and cultures, but the challenges they present must be borne not with complaint and self-pity, but in a manner consonant with our life in the Lord Jesus. In our time we find ourselves confronted with a disease that threatens not only our lives but our manner of living. While we are tempted to focus on the affect the change in life has on each of us personally, our identity as a Christian community also requires us to consider more highly the needs of others rather than ourselves – in the words once again of Saint Paul, we are called to “Bear one another’s burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ.” (Gal 6:2)

It is in this spirit of bearing the burdens of those at greatest risk to the current disease – the elderly, immunocompromised, those with respiratory conditions or diseases, and those who are unaware of potential complications – that we have been called in recent days to limit our interactions with others, in order to safeguard those in need around us. The need to self-limit has increased with our developing understanding of the present strain of coronavirus and the manner of its spreading. We are called to respond as the Body of Christ in a way that will protect the most vulnerable while remaining faithful to our identity as a community of prayer.

RESOURCES FOR PRAYER, WORSHIP

- Spend time at the appropriate moments to participate via video in the services. If your parish does not broadcast its services, you can find other options at <https://www.goarch.org/live-broadcasts>



- Those with newer AppleTV devices, Roku, or Amazon Fire can find the Archdiocesan channel: <https://www.goarch.org/tv>



- Utilize the Archdiocesan Online Chapel for texts of services, daily readings, and lives of the Saints: <https://www.goarch.org/chapel>



- Utilize the various service texts available on AGES Initiatives <http://www.agesinitiatives.com/dcs/public/dcs/servicesindex.html>, singing or reading the hymns. (Replace the litanies of petitions by saying “Lord, have mercy” three times, and replace the Priest’s exclamations or blessings with “Through the prayers of our holy fathers, Lord Jesus Christ our God have mercy on us and save us. Amen.”)
- There are many edifying bible studies and educational podcasts available via Ancient Faith Ministries (<https://www.ancientfaith.com/>) or Orthodox Christian Network (<http://myocn.net/>)



SUPPORT HIS EMINENCE AND THE METROPOLIS MINISTRIES

It costs approximately \$1,000 per day to operate our Metropolis—including Metropolitan Savas’s pastoral visitations, preparations for Summer Camp and GOYA retreats, our vital registry (tracking marriages, baptisms, chrismations, and deaths), and more. Please consider sponsoring a day in the life of the Metropolis. To contribute, visit <https://pittsburgh.goarch.org/support>



METROPOLIS AND PARISH OPERATIONS

His Eminence is cancelling his public appearances until further notice. Those who have been scheduled for visitations after March 31 will be informed by Archdeacon Ryan Gzikowski about the status of the visits.

The offices of the Metropolis of Pittsburgh will be officially closed effective immediately. Individual staff members can be contacted at their appropriate email addresses, which can be found at <https://pittsburgh.goarch.org/metropolis-staff> Keep in mind that while the offices are closed, there will be limited access to mail, telephone, and office voicemail. The most effective means of communication is via email. We ask everyone to be patient as we attempt to maintain essential functionality under these conditions.

BENEFACTORS OF THE HOLY METROPOLIS OF PITTSBURGH

We offer our apologies to Archon Nick & Kathy Lekas for failing to include their names in the 2019 Benefactors list.

MAJOR EVENT UPDATES (CLERGY-LAITY, ST PHOTIOS, ETC.)

Please “stay tuned” for official updates regarding major Metropolis events (Summer Camp, St. Photios Banquet, etc.) and Archdiocesan events (Clergy-Laity Congress). While there are many updates coming from multiple sources (federal, state, county, and local government and government agencies; health agencies like the WHO and CDC; ecclesial bodies like the Ecumenical Patriarchate and the Archdiocese), **please wait for confirmation from the Metropolis regarding anything affecting parish life.**

In the meantime, our dedicated volunteers are working hard to plan the upcoming events, and will continue to prepare for them to run successfully. If they need to be postponed or cancelled, then we will shift gears. Thank you for your patience and understanding!

Non-essential gatherings (coffee hour, social activities, etc.) will be discontinued in all parishes. Classes and meetings (catechism, parish council and philoptochos, retreats) should be transitioned to videoconference. The guidelines promulgated by the respective states should be observed, especially with respect to fundraising activities of the parishes (like luncheons or fish fries).

Church services may continue as scheduled within our parishes, but the parishioners are directed to participate via the internet. A minimum compliment should be present at the parish (no more than 5 persons including the priest, all of whom should be physically healthy and at low risk for the disease, who will participate at the invitation of the priest). Those unable to participate via live streaming are encouraged to utilize other resources available to the faithful (see below). Those clergy, cantors, and parish leaders who fall within the higher risk groups (older than 65; having long-term respiratory conditions; being immunocompromised or living with the immunocompromised; etc.) must remain home.

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His Eminence Metropolitan SAVAS of Pittsburgh, Presiding Hierarch

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