



GREEK ORTHODOX METROPOLIS OF NEW JERSEY

ΙΕΡΑ ΜΗΤΡΟΠΟΛΙΣ ΝΕΑΣ ΙΕΡΣΕΗΣ

May 19, 2020

To the
Devout Orthodox Christians of the Parish Communities of the
Greek Orthodox Metropolis of New Jersey

My Beloved in the Lord,

Χριστός Ανέστη! Christ is Risen!

I pray this letter finds you all well and in good health as our Holy Orthodox Church, our Metropolis, our Ecclesiastical Communities, and our nation continue to confront the challenging effects of COVID-19 (Coronavirus).

The past couple months have been particularly challenging for all people as the devastating effects of the Coronavirus have permeated all facets of society. Nevertheless, there have been noticeable improvements to the present situation which has made it possible for some states and communities to recommence in-person gatherings, albeit, in a limited capacity. As such, the Greek Orthodox Metropolis of New Jersey has been developing a Parish Reopening Strategy so that Parishes and parishioners alike may adequately prepare once the Parishes are permitted to once again open their doors to the devout faithful. A critical element of this strategy centers around the parishioners of each community complying with a series of requirements which conform to State and Local regulations, CDC guidance, and additional Metropolis of New Jersey directives/requirements. A list of these requirements are as follows:

- Parishioners must register their attendance with their full names and contact information. Your Parish Priest will notify you of the registration process and platform which the Parish will use.
- Parishioners must screen themselves prior to coming to church including a temperature check even if they have not experienced any symptoms of COVID-19. If they have any symptoms, they are not to attend Church.
- Parishioners shall not come to the Church by a ride share (Uber, Lyft), taxi, or by means of public transportation. It is strongly recommended that Parishioners arrive in their own vehicle or arrange for another parishioner to transport them.

- Parishioners must sanitize their hands upon entering the Church.
- Parishioners must wear protective masks throughout the Services.
- Parishioners must adhere to the social distancing guidelines of keeping a six foot distance from other parishioners at all times in the pews and throughout the Church. The only exception being for families that have quarantined together, as they will be able to sit together in a designated section of the Church.
- Parishioners are not to wander in the Church, in the Parish facilities, or outside on the parish grounds.
- Small children shall not be allowed to roam the aisles.
- Only one parishioner will be allowed in the restroom at a time. Parishioners must thoroughly wash their hands after using the restroom.
- Parishioners must leave the Church premises, including the parking lot and exterior grounds, upon conclusion of the Divine Liturgy, all the while maintaining social distancing standards.
- If after attending any service a parishioner experiences symptoms of or tests positive for COVID-19, in addition to immediately contacting their medical provider, they must contact the Church office to inform the parish of the date that they attended service.

These measures will help to ensure that all of our Clergy and devout faithful remain as safe as possible during these turbulent times as we start to reopen our Ecclesiastical Communities for the Divine Services. It is my sincerest prayer that as we move forward, we do so safely and with thoughtfulness for our own health and for the health and safety of those around us. Praying that our loving Lord, who is the Physician of our souls and bodies, continues to guard and guide each of you and your families, I remain,

With Paternal Love and Blessings in the Risen Lord,



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