

**VIRGIN MARY & ST. PACHOMIUS CHURCH**

Saturday May 23, 2020

**TOPIC: Resumption of Liturgical Services (PAGE 1 of 3)**

Dear beloved members of the congregation, peace and grace to you.

We, the church clergy hope this letter finds you and your family well and in good health. Our church community has been through a lot over the last few months, and we are all looking forward to returning to a sense of normalcy. We know that all of you have been awaiting the resumption of services in our beloved church. While many things have changed, some things remain the same: our faith in Our Lord Jesus Christ, our firm belief in the sacrament of the Eucharist, and our undying love for one another.

Many of you have been waiting for further details regarding the gradual resumption of liturgical services. For your safety, H.G. Bishop David, in unison with the church priests of the Archdiocese in New Jersey and the New York and New England Diocese have asked each church to adhere strictly to the CDC recommendation, as well as regulations and guidelines of state and local authorities. We also continue to follow these agencies so that we are up to date with any changes that may be issued.

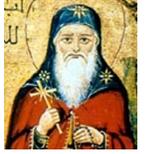
Great care went into facilitating the opening of our church, including the time and frequency of the liturgy to ensure the safety of every single member of the congregation.

God willing, when liturgies resume, you may see some changes as explained in the attached protocol which we kindly ask you to read and follow thoroughly.

We look forward to celebrating the liturgy with you again and are happy to answer any questions you may have about the steps we take to keep you and your family safe. The circumstances under which we must celebrate for the foreseeable future are not ideal and are difficult to work around. But we trust in our Lord that “all things work together for good to those who love God” (Romans 8:28 NKJV).

We want to thank each one of you for your continuous prayers for our beloved church and our beloved shepherd H.G. Bishop David.

**SEE SAFETY PROTOCOLS ON NEXT PAGE**



Saturday May 23, 2020

**TOPIC: Pandemic Protocol for Resuming In-Person Church Services (PAGE 2 of 3)**

Dear beloved:

Many of you have been waiting for further details regarding the gradual restarting of liturgical services. Please read the following in its entirety, which shall be in effect until July 30, 2020, unless otherwise extended by the H.G. Bishop David, in unison with the church priests of the Archdiocese in New Jersey and the Diocese of New York and New England.

1. Based on state law and local regulations and guidelines:
  - a) There will be a TOTAL of 10 persons inside the church building *including children as well as one priest and one deacon*. Consequently, there will be a MAXIMUM of 8 spots for the congregation;
  - b) Each spot is for an individual person, so, for example, a family of 5 would take up 5 spots.
  - c) All household members should remain home (and/or seek medical help) if any member is showing any “COVID related symptoms,” such as (cough, sore throat, shortness of breath, fever of 99 degrees Fahrenheit or higher, chills, muscle pain, fatigue, loss of smell/taste, diarrhea/Gastrointestinal symptoms, and/or has been in direct contact with another sick person exhibiting any of the above-mentioned symptoms within the last 2 weeks, whether confirmed COVID-19 or not).
  - d) Elderly (above 65 and above) and immunocompromised persons are advised to stay home and to make alternate arrangements to receive holy communion with the priest.
  - e) All persons in attendance must maintain a distance of at least 6 feet apart from one another.
  - f) All persons in attendance must wear a face mask each covering the mouth and nose at all times (unless otherwise instructed) and must sanitize their hands upon entry to the church.
  - g) In any setting where social distancing measures are difficult to maintain, more protective face coverings than cloth face coverings must be used.
  - h) A deacon will be at the door to screen the following, prior to congregants being admitted to the Church:
    - i. Confirming if the member is on the pre-assigned list to attend the respective Liturgy.
    - ii. The temperature of each person will be checked prior to admittance along with answering a set of questions on a provided checklist.
  - i) If a congregant or any member of their household exhibits any COVID related symptoms, the entire household will not be admitted to Church.
  - j) To help prevent any potential cross-contamination, cell phones and other personal belongings, such as purses, bags, etc. should be left in the vehicles.



Saturday May 23, 2020

**TOPIC: Pandemic Protocol for Resuming In-Person Church Services (PAGE 3 of 3)**

Based on these limitations, we will begin to pray liturgies multiple times per week. Attendance will be based on the following system:

- a) Families will be attend liturgy from the list of families who registered, on a first come basis. No family will attend twice before all the registered families in that church get a turn to attend.
- b) Prior to the day of each liturgy, there will be a confirmation of the ability of the assigned families to attend as well as a health screening through a brief phone call questionnaire.
- c) If you have been assigned to a particular date, you **MUST** be in church promptly **before the scheduled Start time of Liturgy**. The doors of the church **will be locked promptly at the scheduled start time of liturgy**.
- d) If you have been assigned to a particular date, you **MUST** attend on that date, or else you have taken away from someone else the opportunity to pray liturgy and receive communion. Should you miss your turn, you will have to wait until the entire congregation has had a chance to attend, and then you will have a chance to re-enter for Liturgy.
- e) After the liturgy has concluded, everyone must promptly leave the premises. There will be no social gatherings or agape meals.
- f) All other building facilities will be off-limits

The circumstances under which we must celebrate for the foreseeable future are not ideal and are difficult to work around. We ask each person's cooperation to allow this process to be safe, fair, and as smooth as possible.

Love and Peace,

Father Yacob Ghaly  
Father Youhanna Abadeer