



СРПСКА ПРАВОСЛАВНА ЕПАРХИЈА КАНАДСКА
SERBIAN ORTHODOX DIOCESE OF CANADA

7470 McNiven Rd. R.R #3 Campbellville, Ontario, L0P 1B0, Phone: 905.878.0043

Bp. No. 68/20
March 24, 2020
Milton - Toronto

TO THE CLERGY OF THE SERBIAN ORTHODOX DIOCESE OF CANADA

CANADA

Very Reverend and Reverend fathers,

In response to the newest developments regarding the COVID-19 virus we issue the following instructions and blessing:

Holy Liturgy, according to the Tipik, is still to be served in ALL churches of our Diocese on Wednesdays, Fridays, Saturdays, and Sundays of each week. Due to the limitations placed over the weekend in the province of Quebec, and the limitations taking effect in the province of Ontario at midnight tonight, where most of our diocese gathers to pray, as well as the practice of our brethren Orthodox bishops worldwide, not the least the blessing of His Holiness Patriarch Irinej, we instruct our clergy to perform all services with the help of a chanter, and altar server ONLY. The faithful are not to attend these services in person. We make this decision after consultations with the Public Health Departments of the City of Hamilton, Region of Waterloo, City of Niagara Falls, and the Premier's office.

We have an obligation to strictly adhere to the instructions of our civil authorities, as we have done to date. If there are changes in this regard you will be duly notified. All priests must be available for their flock in this time of need to bless their homes, commune the sick, and comfort the scared – should it be requested. Clergy who have indications of illness should, as all others, seek professional medical help and need to inform the Bishop of the same. Be reasonable and avoid unnecessary gatherings.

We continue to follow the developing situation worldwide, but especially in Canada, and unceasingly pray to the Lord, the only One who is capable of healing our souls and bodies, to aide us in keeping our faith strong. We must follow the instructions of civil authorities, but we cannot allow worldly temptations to shake our hope in the Omnipotent Lord. We clergy should be an example to the faithful of the need to multiply our prayers, fasting and petitions to the Lord. We pray for our leadership, all those working in the medical field, and all those directly afflicted in this difficult time.

With hierarchical blessing,

BISHOP OF CANADA

