



**EPARCHY OF SAINT MARON OF BROOKLYN  
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**Revised Statement on the Coronavirus**

Dear Brother Priests, Deacons and Subdeacons, Religious Men and Women, and Lay Faithful:

These days of the Coronavirus have been most difficult. We look to God and to modern science to help us in our great need. The Center for Disease Control has recommended that social gatherings are to be avoided for the next 8 weeks. Some states have prohibited such gatherings by law, giving regulations on the numbers of people gathered. This gives us deep pause to reflect on what our 45 parishes ought to do as we look for a way forward in this new reality.

I ask that we do not cancel the celebration of the Divine Liturgy and continue to offer it daily. In this time of crisis, we need the Liturgy. If possible, I encourage our priests to live stream the Liturgy to our faithful who wish to make a spiritual communion (see prayer below). During this time of crisis, the faithful are dispensed from the obligation to attend the Divine Liturgy on Sunday. In fact, in this present crisis, I strongly recommend what health officials have been telling us, to stay home unless for something essential.

On Sundays, I ask the priests to observe all directives issued by civil authorities as best as possible with pastoral prudence, and to be creative. Times for the Sacrament of Penance and Friday Lenten devotions need not be cancelled, but social gatherings should be cancelled at this time.

Let us redouble our efforts to care for one another in creative ways, as Pope Francis has urged us. In times like this God can bring out the best in us, and we can rise to the call of service. I am asking our priests to keep the doors of their Church open to those who desire to come and pray, and to be available to the sick, especially to offer the Sacrament of the Anointing of the Sick.

May the prayers, Our Lady, Saint Joseph, and the Hosts of Heaven be with us.

Sincerely yours in Christ,

+ Gregory

+ Gregory John Mansour

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Dear Brothers and Sisters:

Saint Jean-Marie Vianney once said “when we feel the love of God growing cold, let us instantly make a Spiritual Communion. When we cannot go to the church, let us turn towards the tabernacle; no wall can shut us out from the good God.”

Below is a prayer composed to help us live in communion with one another during this time of social distancing. I invite you to pray this prayer when you feel the need to be in deeper communion with God and others, and to be of service to those who are most in need.

+ Gregory

### **Prayer for Spiritual Communion**

O Divine Ocean of Mercy and Compassion, be with us in our time of trial and difficulties. Today I make an act of spiritual communion with you, the Life-Giving Trinity, Father, Son and Holy Spirit. At this time I am not able to receive the sacred body and blood of my Lord, God and Savior Jesus Christ, but I choose to live in union with him and in the unity of the Holy Spirit. I offer my day, my daily life, my joys and sorrows to you, for those around me, and for the whole world. Be with us O life-giving Triune God, for we know that nothing in this world has power over us. O Lover of all people, have mercy on us and on the whole world.