



Holy Trinity Greek Orthodox Church

ΙΕΡΟΣ ΝΑΟΣ ΑΓΙΑΣ ΤΡΙΑΔΟΣ

Holy Trinity Implementations CoVid-19 (Coronavirus) Pandemic March 17, 2020

As the unprecedented public health crisis continues due to the CoVid-19 (Coronavirus) Pandemic, I wish to take this opportunity to inform you, the faithful of Holy Trinity, that ongoing updates will be emailed to you and posted on the parish website. These updates can be view at: www.holytrinitywestfield.org/parish-news/

Cancellations

Other than the divine services, all activities, events, and gatherings at Holy Trinity have been cancelled effective March 13. Local and State agencies will announce when gatherings can safely resume. Long term this includes parish events even into April, such as: *Parish Oratorical Festival*, *Rise Against Hunger* and *The Spirit of Lent Concert*.

Curfew

The State of New Jersey has issued a statewide curfew. This is in effect daily from 8:00 PM until 5:00 AM. As noted below, this curfew will mandate change to scheduled services.

These actions are precautionary steps that will help contain the spread of this infectious virus. For more information please visit the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html>

✝ Divine Services

The Church teaches us that in times of trouble and tribulation we are to call upon the Lord's name and remain strong in the faith. At the end of the Divine Liturgy on Sunday, March 15, a prayer service was held asking for our Lord's protection against this illness and to disperse all manner of disease that rises up against us. It was witnessed that people did indeed maintain social distancing, as families stayed in individual clusters around the church as they prayed.

Time Change to Services

To uphold the State curfew the time for all evening services this week and next has been changed to 5:30 PM.

- SACRAMENT OF HOLY UNCTION – 5:30 PM, Tuesday, March 17
- PRESANCTIFIED LITURGY – 5:30 PM, Wednesday, March 18
- AKATHIST HYMN – 5:30 PM, Friday, March 20

Keeping in touch with elderly and parishioners

In times of crisis, often we are tempted to isolate ourselves from one another. With this particular public threat, we are asked to maintain a safe distance from others. But not to the extent that we overlook those who are more vulnerable and those who are part of our church family. Therefore, I ask all parishioners of Holy Trinity to maintain a connection with the church. If you can't attend a divine service, I ask that you contact a fellow parishioner to see how they are doing. I ask that you call an elderly parishioner to see if they need help buying groceries or picking up medication. If you know of a parishioner that needs assistance, please contact me as soon as possible so that I can reach out to them.

Encouragement

Finally, I want you to remember that we are people of prayer. To whatever degree you practice social distancing, you are never too isolated to pray. Our Lord even indicates that being alone is appropriate for prayer, *"When you pray, go into your room, and when you have shut your door, pray to your Father who is in the secret place; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you openly."* – Matthew 6:6

As people of prayer, we understand that our heavenly Father knows of the things we need before we ask Him. – Matthew 6:9. We are to take this epidemic seriously but not become overly anxious and worried, for which of you by worrying can add one cubit to your stature. – Matthew 6:27. Anxiety won't make this epidemic disappear, it only causes panic. We are to practice safe techniques in confronting this terrible disease, but we are also called to continue our quest to seek the kingdom of God and all His righteousness. – Matthew 6:33. For in Him is our salvation and eternal life.

I pray to our merciful God for your wellbeing and strength as we confront this pandemic with faith and divine grace. I remain,

In Christ, the Physician of our souls and bodies,

✠Rev. Fr. Peter Deluizis