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Saturday, June 13, 2020

## GUIDELINES FOR CHURCH ATTENDANCE DURING COVID-19

*“The Lord said...“I have heard the prayer and plea you have made before me; I have consecrated this temple, which you have built, by putting my Name there forever. My eyes and my heart will always be there” (1 Kings 9:3)*

Dear Beloved Congregation of the Church of the Virgin Mary and St Athanasius, St. Philopateer and St. Anthony Church, St. Mina and Pope Kyrillos Church, the Church of the Resurrection and the Church of the Nativity.

Peace and grace to you,

We truly are blessed with God’s abundant love. We all waited patiently for this moment to come together in one heart to celebrate the Divine Liturgy. God has heard your prayers as the Government of Ontario recently announced an increase in the capacity for services in places of worship. We can’t wait to see you in the coming days.

Effective Friday, June 12, 2020, we started increasing the permitted attendance in our churches and as per the direction of our Diocese, under the auspices of His Grace Bishop Mina, we are now gradually increasing the capacity to celebrate the Divine Liturgies to the 30% of each church’s maximum capacity in accordance with the guidelines outlined by the Government of Ontario.

We know that you are eager to return to church and we know that you will help us make sure we do it right.

Registration and screening are essential requirements set out by the Government of Ontario to ensure that we are all safe. As the Government has said, tracing is important in preventing the spread of COVID-19. Accordingly, **only those registered are welcome to attend any specific service**. The reason registration is important is it allows us to communicate with anyone who attends a liturgy in the event that someone tests positive for COVID-19 to ensure that we are all proactive in getting tested and stopping the spread of COVID-19.

We will continue to invite those who previously completed the registration process through Sunday, June 21, 2020. Following this short period, we will be sharing with you a new booking system so you can select the specific liturgy that you would like to attend.

In order to keep everyone safe, we share with you guidelines that we ask you to read and share with your household.



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## General Instructions

1. If you or anyone in your household has any symptoms of COVID-19 or feels sick or has signs of illness (including: fever, cough, sneezing, runny nose, tiredness, shortness of breath), you should self-isolate and contact your doctor, and refrain from joining us for any services at the Church until such time as you are cleared.
2. All attendees must complete the online registration process, including the necessary consent, and confirm that all information they provide is accurate.
3. Seniors and individuals who may be immunocompromised are advised to consult their family physician to evaluate whether they should attend the service in the Church. If they are recommended to go to Church, they should register online on the new booking system. If they are recommended to stay home or they prefer to, they should contact their father of confession or the servant at 416-806 0297 to make arrangements to take communion at home.
4. Households are requested to come together to the Church, sit together, take communion together and then leave Church together.

## Before Coming to Church

1. You will either be called, if you are registered under the old system, or will book your preferred date and time to celebrate the Divine Liturgy using the new booking system. A phone number will be available to help with the registration.
2. If you are not registered please do not come as we are unable to permit you in to the Church to ensure that we adhere with screening protocols required by the Government.
3. Please bring your own mask, water bottle, Agpeya, Divine Liturgy book, communion napkin and head covering for ladies.

## Upon Entering the Church:

1. You will be screened for temperature and you will re-confirm all screening questions at the entrance.
2. Please sanitize your hands.
3. Ushers will then check your registration and guide you to your assigned seating.



Coptic Orthodox Churches

**Mississauga**

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## **Attending Liturgy**

1. Everyone attending of the Divine Liturgy should wear a face covering and preferably gloves.
2. Household members, including children, are not allowed to wander in the Church and must remain in your assigned seating unless for emergencies or necessities.
3. Please keep a physical distance of two metres at all times between you and all other congregants.
4. We are all strictly prohibited from hugging and kissing one another.
5. During communion, we ask that you follow the instructions of our father the priest and the volunteers.
6. After communion, we ask that you kindly conclude your attendance with a prayer and exit after your household members have taken communion together. Please do not wait for the conclusion of the Divine Liturgy to avoid crowding.
7. No social gathering is allowed at any time during your attendance at the Church.

## **After Attending the Divine Liturgy**

As previously highlighted, the reason registration is important is it allows us to communicate with anyone who attends a liturgy in the event that someone tests positive for COVID-19 to allow you to get tested in a timeline manner and to facilitate effective tracing. As such, if you become sick and test positive for COVID-19 at any time after you have attended a service, we ask that you contact the front desk at 905-567-4032 to ensure that we are able to be proactive with all congregants.

Please keep any eye out for more information in the coming few days.

We pray for all of God's blessings for you and your family in all your ways. May the Lord continue to protect each of you during this COVID-19 pandemic.

We look forward to seeing you all very soon and celebrating the Divine Liturgy together in His house.

God bless you.