



Eparchy of Our Lady of Lebanon of Los Angeles Office of the Bishop

Prot. 30/01/20

April 2, 2020

Dear Clergy and Faithful of the Eparchy of Our Lady of Lebanon of Los Angeles,

I know these times have been challenging for us as individuals, as a Church, and indeed for the whole world. Many people are suffering from illness, lack of employment and the uncertainties that confront us. As you are aware most, if not all, of our churches are closed to the public as are many other places where people gather. From our understanding of this virus, this seems to be wise and prudent. Each day we hear stories of people coming forward and helping neighbors and strangers alike.

I write to ask those of you that have the resources to do so, to assist our parishes to pay their own bills and to offer additional assistance to those in need. The income of all of our parishes has been curtailed, sometimes to a very high decrease in donations. Utilities, salaries and overall maintenance bills continue.

People call our parishes and knock on our doors asking for some type of financial assistance. Most of our Churches have provided what they can, but the need continues to rise. As we worry about our individual homes and our loved ones, it is important we do not forget the Church which is our common home. Remember, the Church is here to assist in every way. We are here to serve you and we work for the well-being of everyone. We pray that no one is in need at this time, and we must always keep in mind to take care of each other, especially in these difficult times.

As His Holiness, Pope Francis said in his Extraordinary Moment of Prayer this past Friday, “Just like those disciples, who spoke anxiously with one voice, saying ‘We are perishing’ (v. 38), so we too have realized that we cannot go on thinking of ourselves, but only together can we do this.” We need to work together during this difficult time. Whatever time it takes, we will overcome this adversity with the grace of God sooner than later.

Again, if you are in a position to assist, I ask that you do so. Many of our parishes have on-line giving or “donate” buttons on their websites. Please find a way to help. It is a call of solidarity to assist and support each other in times of need. However, I call on everyone to pray for each other, for the end of the pandemic, for the affected by the virus, and for people working to alleviate the pains and burdens.

With my gratitude, best wishes, and prayers for your well-being, I remain

Sincerely yours in Christ,

+ A. Elias Zaidan

Bishop of the Eparchy of Our Lady of Lebanon of Los Angeles