



Dear Beloved Brothers & Sisters in Christ,

In one of the hymns we chant during this season of Great Lent, we pray: "*Lord of the Powers, be with us. For in times of distress, we have no other help but You. Lord of the Powers, have mercy on us.*" In the present moment, not only our country, but our whole world is stricken with fear at the spread of this virus (Coronavirus COVID-19). I wish at this time to clarify to you all that our Ascension Parish is working diligently to keep everyone within our community healthy and safe from this rapidly changing situation. The health and safety of our faithful is our number one priority.

We have called upon health professionals and communication specialists in our parish to form a "Health & Safety Task Force". This committee has been meeting regularly for the last week in order to keep our Parish informed and help slow the spread of this virus within our walls. In conjunction with our esteemed Parish Council, steps are being taken to assure safety measures for all that come through our doors. Some of these measures were outlined in our past correspondence to you and will be apparent upon entering our building. We are continuing to assess and implement best practices.

With this in mind, and especially with our faith and hope in God, who as our loving Father watches over us, **all non-Liturgical meetings and events are postponed or cancelled until further notice.**

- **Sunday Church School classes are cancelled until further notice**
- **Youth AND Adult Greek School Program classes are cancelled until further notice. Additionally, we are postponing the Greek Independence Program that was scheduled for tomorrow after Liturgy.**
- **Coffee Fellowship Hour will be cancelled until further notice**
- **The Lenten Lecture Series will be postponed until further notice.**

We've also received word that the following Metropolis events have been cancelled:

- Holy Apostles Celebration of Books
- March 21 Metropolis Family Synaxis Lenten Retreat

We will be keeping all of you informed of any other changes. I implore all to be vigilant regarding your health and watching out for your loved ones. I also humbly ask that during this time of Great Lent, where our Church calls us to intense prayer and fasting, we keep our faith strong and unhindered. We also should remain diligent about the practical instructions issued by the [CDC](#) regarding actions we must take to protect ourselves and others.

May God bless you and keep you safe,

+Fr. Sotiri