



УКРАЇНСЬКА ПРАВОСЛАВНА ЦЕРКВА В КАНАДІ
UKRAINIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH OF CANADA
L'ÉGLISE ORTHODOXE UKRAINIENNE DU CANADA

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TO THE CLERGY AND FAITHFUL OF THE UKRAINIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH OF
CANADA
REGARDING THE CORONAVIRUS PANDEMIC (#6)

“Look down from the height of Your holiness upon Your people who stand and await abundant mercy from You. Visit us with Your goodness and deliver us from the possession of Satan and preserve our life with Your holy and solemn laws.”

(Excerpt from the First Kneeling Prayer at Pentecost)

Glory to Jesus Christ!

Your Graces, Reverend Clergy, Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

We have been moved to greet you in preparation of the great feast-day, Holy Pentecost, two days hence. As with the feast-day of Holy Resurrection, our celebration this year differs from that of previous years, in that, our attendance in church at this time is very limited, usually to clergy, chanters, elder (sextant), and perhaps a technician if the service is live-streamed. We are able, to some extent, to participate from home. Following this Sunday's Divine Liturgy, the clergy will read the Kneeling Prayers and we invite our faithful to participate. Going forward from this, we are anticipating, shortly, wise direction from His All-Holiness, Patriarch Bartholomew I regarding Holy Communion and the other sacraments and, thus call upon our clergy and faithful to be patient as we await a statement from the Phanar.

Governments throughout the world are making decisions regarding social gatherings, social-distancing, the use of face-masks, the use of disinfectants and other measures to keep people safe. We, too must be ready to act according to changing conditions. After Easter it is traditional to start serving panakhydas for our loved-ones, beginning with St. Thomas Sunday (Providna nedilya). In some parts of our Church it is the custom to serve panakhydas at cemeteries on Pentecost and continuing into the summer. As access to cemeteries is being allowed under certain conditions, by the Civil Authorities, we are inviting our faithful to arrange memorial services with their local clergy as soon as this Sunday and into the summer, while maintaining the local civil guidelines.

Also, the rules for social gatherings are being loosened in various jurisdictions, therefore meetings can be held in church-halls, auditoriums and generally on church property, while observing all local conditions as to numbers that may gather, social-distancing, disinfecting before and after the meeting, the use of masks etc. It is up to the local parish council to decide how these rules will be enforced and how attendees will be determined. If parishes cannot meet these requirements, then gatherings must be delayed.

We will continue to monitor the situation, listen, consult and keep in touch, to determine the best path forward.

Let us pray for the cessation of the spread of the Coronavirus and for God's Providence and granting to us wisdom, a strong will and determination to follow His Will. Please, be assured of my prayers for everyone of you.

With love in Christ,

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Winnipeg, Canada

June 5, 2020