



Albanian Orthodox Archdiocese in America

*517 East Broadway
South Boston, MA 02127-4415*

Phone: 617-268-1275

Fax: 617-268-3184

*Metropolitan Tikhon, Locum
Tenens of Boston, New England
and the Albanian Archdiocese*

*Very Rev Arthur E. Liolin
Chancellor*

March 30, 2020

To the Clergy and Laity of the Albanian Orthodox Archdiocese in America:

We are in an unprecedented time, with the spread of the coronavirus/COVID-19 around the world. You have received multiple communications regarding the prudent actions taken by our church in response to the crisis. Linked here is a new message from Metropolitan Tikhon:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=e2bdM4O7OrM&feature=youtu.be>

The current pandemic has fundamentally, if temporarily, changed every aspect of our lives - home, work, school, and especially parish life. While we struggle to understand the appropriate next steps, and while we wait for the crisis to pass, it is important to understand that we are all in this together.

It is also important to keep up an approximation of our parish life, so we do not lose the connection to something so integral to our existence. To that end, we encourage each parish to utilize technology to stream and record services, to the extent directed by Metropolitan Tikhon. There are many software products (Zoom, etc.) which will allow the broadcast of and remote participation in our liturgical life. We also encourage using technology for two-way interaction, including ideas like "virtual coffee hours" after services, where parishioners can connect with clergy and each other.

We encourage each parishioner to reach out to the most vulnerable in our church family, including those living alone and the elderly. Social distancing does not prevent a call or an email. Reaching out at this time allows you to live out your faith and demonstrates that the church is not limited to a physical building or gathering.

Please also keep in mind the financial well-being of your parish. With the current closure impacting everything from candle sales to collections to fundraisers, it is important to remember to support your parish. Of course some parishioners may be financially impacted by the crisis, and we keep them in our thoughts and prayers, but for those who are able please try to keep up with your usual pattern of giving.

This pandemic will end, and we will again gather together to celebrate the Divine Liturgy and to give thanks for coming through the crisis. We pray for a quick end to the pandemic, and for the continued health and safety of all of you.

Very Rev. Arthur E. Liolin, Chancellor

Michael A. Gregory, Lay Vice-Chairman