

March 12, 2020

To all the faithful of the Archdiocese of Osaka,

**On precautionary measures against  
the spread of novel coronavirus (COVID-19) infection (III)**

+ Peace of Christ!

In light of the current situation of the spread of coronavirus, I have decided to adopt the following measures:

1. The public celebration of all Sunday Masses from March 15 (Sunday) to March 31 (Tuesday) will be suspended in all parishes as well as in centers where Mass is usually celebrated with a large number of the lay faithful.
2. The obligation to attend Sunday Masses is dispensed for all the faithful in the Archdiocese of Osaka for March 15, 22 and 29. I ask each faithful to read the Sacred Scriptures and privately offer prayers at home such as by praying the Rosary. Moreover, the Archdiocese of Tokyo is broadcasting Sunday Masses online. Please refer to their website: <http://tokyo.catholic.jp/>
3. During the period stated above, all public celebration of weekday Masses will be suspended except for those places where only a small number of the faithful attend. If the celebrant of private Masses in religious communities and if priests, when they celebrate their daily private Mass so wish, they may use the special Order of Mass called, "Masses for Various Needs" found in the Roman Missal under the section, "Masses and Prayers for Various Circumstances" (the liturgical colour used is purple).
4. During the said period, please postpone or cancel other church-related events, meetings or seminars as much as possible.
5. The celebration of funerals and marriages are permitted provided that all necessary precautionary measures are taken to avoid infection.
6. Concerning the Archdiocesan events and meetings originally planned during this period:
  - a. The celebration of the Archdiocesan Vocation Day - the Diaconal Ordination scheduled for March 20 (Friday) will be postponed. Instead, I ask the faithful to privately pray for more vocations on this day. The date for the Diaconal Ordination of Claretian missionary, Br. Paul Tran Xuan Nhu Y is yet to be confirmed.
  - b. The Presbyteral Council (*shisai-hyogi-kai*), Assembly of Coordinators of pastoral zones (*chiku-cho*) and Presidents of Archdiocesan Committees (Wednesday 18th),

the Archdiocesan Finance Council (Tuesday 24th), Assembly of the College of Consultors and the monthly meeting of pastoral workers of the Archdiocese (*gesshu*, Wednesday 25th) will be held as planned.

I ask you to circulate this directive as widely as possible to all the faithful including those from overseas. This directive in other languages will be published on the Archdiocesan website.

If it be still necessary to adopt precautionary measures against the viral infection in April, I will announce further advisories. It is indeed a painful decision that a suspension of public celebration of Mass must be ordered at this time of the year when we are approaching Holy Week, the most important days for us all. With this pain in our hearts, let us try to live this moment in solidarity with many of those in suffering. I ask the Lord for the swift end of this calamity.

Sincerely yours in Christ,

Thomas Aquinas Manyo Cardinal Maeda  
Archbishop of Osaka