

No. 85/2020

**In the blessed name of the Tri-une God, Self-existent,
Beginningless and Endless, Perfect in Being, (Glory be to Him)**

**Moran Mar Baselios Marthoma Paulose II Catholicos of the East and
Malankara Metropolitan enthroned on the Apostolic Throne of St. Thomas**



Blessings to our beloved Vicars of the churches, Priests of the locality, *Kaisthanees* and faithful of all the Parishes!

Our dearly beloved in the Lord,

We are going through the days of Covid -19, the pandemic which is spreading across the globe encompassing all nations and regions. There are strict government regulations to avoid further spread of the infection. Worship is conducted in our churches with the number of people permitted by the Government. We are waiting for the permission for our believers also to come to their churches and take part in the liturgy and other sacraments. Activities of the spiritual organizations cannot be carried out in a full fledged manner. The economic and social instability and uncertainty are becoming large. Our Church members across the globe who played a vital role in the prosperity and growth of our Church and the nation are in unspeakable agony. A sizeable number of them are preparing to return to their homeland. The nations of the world are battling against Covid- 19 pandemic with all their might. It is significant that the measures taken by the Government of Kerala and the Government of India in respect of containing this pandemic and the untiring efforts of our health workers have attracted world wide attention and praise. We, our brother Metropolitans, the priests and beloved faithful have been offering our tearful prayers to get over the crisis resultant on Covid pandemic. We would like to remind you that, “the Lord’s hand is not shortened, that it cannot save; neither His ear heavy, that it cannot hear” (Isaiah 59:1). Let us trust that the Lord who delivered the Israelites from their afflictions hearing their cries, will come down and help us to overcome this crisis.

Beloved of the Lord,

The Church too is facing an unprecedented crisis in the Central–Diocesan–Parish levels. When we analyze the present situation, following observations can be arrived at:

1. The Church gives importance to church-centered corporate worship, family worship and personal prayers. Our believers cannot come to churches and take part in church services and sacraments. We cannot say when this stalemate would end. For this very reason, we are compelled to attend the holy services through online and social media.
2. The stagnation during the Lockdown period has caused a large number of people to suffer financial hardship and unemployment. The income of many families has been drained out. Everyone is affected by financial insecurity.

3. The frightening news about Covid -19 pestilence and the intensity of its spreading are causing major emotional and psychological disturbances, especially among the sick and the elderly.
4. The sudden fall in income and a host of Lockdown related mental stress have given rise to growing confusion in families and marital discords.
5. All incomes of the parish churches, including monthly subscriptions and offertory and the incomes of the Central Office have been stopped. Apart from this, the donations received from within and outside of India have been obstructed due to the economic uncertainty.
6. The hospitals and other charity projects of the Church have come to a standstill. It is almost impossible to give salaries to the employees and other allied expenses on account of the drastic fall in income.

Considering the facts stated above, it is imperative on our part to curtail the expenses of the institutions and organizations of the Church to the maximum till the time we overcome the fallout consequent on Covid-19. To this end, we put forward some suggestions:

1. Maximum control is to be exercised on the general expenses of the Church, the working expenses of the Dioceses, Parishes and all the associated institutions. The Church Centre, Diocesan Centers, Parishes and Spiritual Organizations should resort to judicious spending after meticulous planning and foresight.
2. Set priorities for expenses and adjust expenses accordingly.
3. Parishes should ensure that worship continues uninterrupted during and after the Lockdown period and that there is no interruption to the Diocesan share from the parish, salaries of priests, sextons and other employees.
4. All constructions and developmental projects except inevitable repair works have to be put on hold for the time being.
5. Encourage online remittances to send money to parishes and the Diocesan Centers. The details of online remittance to the Church Headquarters is available in our website www.mosc.in
6. Our parishes should refrain from extravagance and prodigality during and after the Lockdown when we need to exercise complete economic discipline; feasts and festivals should be observed in a simple way; money should be utilized in the most judicious and efficient way so as to avoid all types of wastage.
7. The office bearers of the parishes should fully utilize its income sources, and ensure the uninterrupted functioning of the parish and the organizations thereof even at this time of financial crisis.
8. Our homes and churches should become resorts of compassion and consolation. Family prayer is to be done in an orderly way involving all the members. Our believers should try their best to give the mandatory and other contributions to the parish. Parishes should strive to reach the people in need within their vicinity and jurisdiction.
9. The Government of India has instructed us to submit the monthly report of the rescue and rehabilitation activities of the Church till the Covid crisis is over. The Diocesan Metropolitans have been designated to collect the monthly report of the Covid – 19 activities of their respective

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parishes. Such monthly reports shall be handed over to the Diocesan Metropolitans after obtaining the schedule stipulated by each Diocese.

Dearly beloved,

It is essential that we continue our unceasing prayers for the eradication of Covid -19. We should not forget that “the Eternal God is our refuge and underneath are the everlasting arms”. Let us rely on the grace of God. It is really laudable that the chain prayers under the leadership of our Metropolitans, Priests and Spiritual Organizations; sermons and teachings to embolden our believers and the online activities of Sunday School and OVBS make great strides in the spiritual life of our people. We wish that all our believers shall offer special prayers for the eradication of Covid 19 along with the prayers in the morning, noon and evening. To facilitate this, it is advisable to ring the bells in our churches on specific prayer times. We must be careful not only to pray for the elimination of the Covid pandemic but also to comply with the instructions given by the authorities for the safety of their respective countries. Efforts should be made to adopt a lifestyle that suits the Nature and the environment. It is heartening to see that the Nature is restoring its natural rhythm once disturbed by the indiscreet consumption spree of humankind. May God grant all of us the presence of mind to overcome the threat of Covid 19 by following a spirit filled simple life.

May the Grace and Blessings of God Almighty abide with you forever. And may the prayers of the Mother of God the Holy Virgin Mary, St.Thomas the Apostle of India, our Holy Fathers Yeldo Mar Baselios, Mar Gregorios, Mar Dionysios and all the Holy Saints be a stronghold for us. Amen.

Our Father Who art in Heaven.....

Baselios Marthoma Paulose II

From Catholicate Aramana
Devalokam, Kottayam, Kerala, India
On May01, 2020.