



ARCHDIOCESE OF NASSAU

Office of the Archbishop

March 5, 2020

A MESSAGE REGARDING CORONAVIRUS (COVID-19)

Beloved in Christ:

There is much concern locally over the global spread of Coronavirus (COVID-19). We must take this reality very seriously.

This is by no means to indicate that we are currently in a crisis or epidemic locally rather it is to exercise an abundance of caution and to be proactive and responsible in the face of this current reality.

First of all, we must be accurately informed with the facts. For that purpose we should refer to the Dashboard posted on the website of the Ministry of Health. It can be found at bahamas.gov.bs/health. If you have any questions or concerns, please consult your healthcare provider immediately, and without delay.

Secondly, it is essential that we maintain good hygiene always. This means:

- Cover your cough or sneeze with a tissue then throw the tissue into the trash.
- Avoid close contact with persons who are sick.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth without washing your hands.
- Clean and disinfect objects and surfaces that are frequently touched, i.e. doorknobs.
- Stay at home when you are sick except to get medical care.
- Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds.

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Thirdly, with regards to our gatherings for worship, the following guidelines are now to be observed with immediate effect:

- Empty all the holy water stoops at the church doors and empty the baptismal font, as well.
- The distribution of the Precious Blood during Communion is temporarily suspended.
- Physical contact such as, handshaking during the Sign of Peace, and holding hands during the recitation of the Our Father, is temporarily suspended.
- For the time being, Communion should be distributed in the hand and not on the tongue.
- Eucharistic Ministers should thoroughly wash their hands before and after the distribution of Communion.
- The celebrant is to use a verbal greeting and refrain from physical contact while greeting parishioners before and after Mass.
- Parishioners who have respiratory flu-like symptoms are encouraged to stay at home.

As our circumstances change with regard to Coronavirus (COVID-19), these guidelines will be modified accordingly and you will be duly informed.

In the meantime, let us pray for all those who have contracted Coronavirus (COVID-19) in other countries that they may be restored to full health. Let us pray too that we may be spared any outbreak of this disease among us.

Devotedly yours in Christ,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Patrick C. Pinder". The signature is written in a cursive style with a cross at the beginning.

Most Reverend Patrick C. Pinder, S.T.D., C.M.G.
Archbishop of Nassau