



Eparchy of Our Lady of Lebanon of Los Angeles

March 26, 2021

Come Home for Easter

Dear Friends,

The Covid-19 Pandemic has disrupted our lives this past year. As we begin to see the light at the end of the tunnel with the vaccine distribution; life will be back to some type of “*normal*” soon. Therefore, I call on you to come back to your spiritual home that is the Church.

Holy Week and Easter is an opportune time to come together to celebrate the Mystery of our Salvation, to thank God for His Divine Providence, and for the Abundance of His Blessings and Graces. Our return to Church is not just a matter of dispensation and obligation, but our yearning, desire, and need to be with the Lord. As the Psalm says, “I was glad when they said to me, ‘Let us go to the house of the Lord!’” (122:1).

In our life, we need to give God priority over everything else as He is the Creator, the Provider, the Sustainer, and the Source of all good things. God is the most essential. Therefore, we need to give Him what is right, not what is left of our Time, Talent, Treasures, and Energy. Our Churches miss your presence, your participation. The Church is a community of believers, not just the buildings. In each Church, you will find my brother priests welcoming you with open arms and hearts.

As to the canonical dispensation of attending the Divine Liturgy, it will be lifted according to the local state requirements since we are spread over 34 states. However, I am to lift the dispensation completely in the Eparchy on July 1, 2021, with the call on everyone to give the proper respect due to God.

I wish to assure you that our Churches are taking all the proper health and safety precautions. Our Churches are following CDC requirements even better than stores, restaurants, airlines and other open locations. To ensure everyone’s safety, we need to remember to wear our facemasks properly, follow proper social distancing guidelines, and sanitation. However, if at any time you feel some type of illness, you should stay home as an act of safety and care for the whole community and the well-being of everyone.

We have been hearing, talking about social distancing during the Pandemic, I hope and pray that you felt the closeness of God more than ever in these times. As your Bishop, I was carrying you close to my heart and mind in my daily prayers asking the Lord to grant eternal life to our faithful departed, to all the victims of the Coronavirus and their grieving families. We pray for

the safety and support of medical personnel, and for all those who have been impacted by the Pandemic. I will keep carrying you in my prayers, as I hope you carry me in yours.

Through the intercession of Saint Joseph, especially this year dedicated to him, along with the Blessed Mother, the Patroness of our Eparchy, may our loving God protect you, accompany, and bless you abundantly!

Come home for Easter.

With my sincere best wishes and prayers, I remain

Yours in Christ,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "+A.E. Zaidan". The signature is written in a cursive style with a small cross at the beginning.

+A. Elias Zaidan

Bishop of the Eparchy of Our Lady of Lebanon of Los Angeles