



## *Eparchy of Our Lady of Lebanon of Los Angeles*

June 30, 2021

My Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

Greetings and Peace!

The past year and a half has been a difficult and painful time for many of us as the COVID-19 Pandemic raged at home and abroad but now we see the light at the end of the tunnel. We are finally able to return to gather with our families and friends, and most importantly, to gather as a community of Christian faithful.

As of **July 1, 2021**, the canonical dispensation from attending the Divine Liturgy will be completely lifted in our Eparchy, with a call on everyone to return to their second home and give the proper respect due to God. All of our Churches continue to take the proper health and safety precautions and follow the CDC requirements.

Please find below the list of guidelines for General Consideration:

- Liturgical celebration and other religious services are allowed indoors without limitations on capacity or social distancing.
- Masses may be celebrated without restrictions.
- The Holy Communion may be given by intinction or on the hand but will be at the Pastor's discretion.
- Holy Water will be available.
- Hymnals, missalettes, bulletins, and offertory baskets will be reinstated at the discretion of the Pastor.
- The Sign of Peace during Mass will also be reinstated at the discretion of the Pastor.
- We ask those who are not fully vaccinated or unable to receive the vaccine to continue to wear masks during any gatherings. Masks are not required for those who have received the full dose of the COVID-19 vaccine. We ask Parishes to post signs stating mask use for unvaccinated attendees. Vaccination verification is not required.
- Parishes may resume gatherings including social gatherings, group gatherings, and prayer meetings while observing the proper health measurements.
- Our parishes will continue to diligently clean the Churches after services and provide hand sanitizer for those in attendance.

- Those who are homebound, seriously ill, or immunocompromised will be exempted from the obligation to attend Mass.
- Live-streamed Divine Liturgical service continuation will be at the discretion of the Pastor and according to local needs.

We are joyous to welcome you back home and to celebrate the Divine Liturgy once again as a community. As Jesus said, “For where two or three are gathered in my name, I am there among them” (Matt 18:30). We have been physically, emotionally, and psychologically distant from each other and our Church for a long time, it is now time for us to celebrate and rejoice together.

My brother priests and I welcome all of you back with open hearts and open arms. We look forward to seeing you and your families back at the Liturgies and connecting once again with the greater community.

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