



GREEK ORTHODOX ARCHDIOCESE OF AMERICA

March 17, 2020

The Reverend Clergy of the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America

Beloved and Faithful Brothers in Christ,

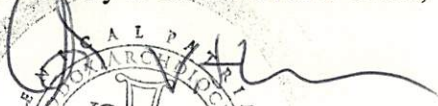
With the blessing of His Eminence Archbishop Elpidophoros of America I write to you today, extending my solicitous concern for all of you in this time of the global pandemic of Covid-19. As you all know, for the sake of the health of our Faithful, the Archdiocese has taken many responsible measures to date, but I am now specifically clarifying how *all* services are to be conducted throughout the Archdiocese.

For all services, including the Divine Liturgy, only one priest and one chanter will conduct the services; meaning, the Faithful will not assemble, but participate virtually via the Internet and multimedia. There will be no exceptions to this condition without the express permission of the Archbishop.

This is a time when all of us, clergy and laity alike, are challenged to live our Faith not only responsibly, but with more determination through our access to God in “Spirit and in truth.” We affirm that it is not the walls that contain our faith, but our hearts, and that our Lord Jesus Christ appears to us, “even though the doors are shut” and grants us His peace (John 20:19).

Please use these conditions to educate and inform your faithful, using email messages and bulletins to communicate to them that even though the Divine Services are being conducted in this restricted manner, we are united in prayer, in Spirit, and in truth.

Faithfully in our Lord Jesus Christ,



The V. Rev. Andreas Vithoulkas
Chancellor of the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America