

April 23, 2021

To all the faithful of the Diocese

Thomas Aquinas Manyo Cardinal Maeda
Archbishop of Osaka

**On precautionary measures taken against the spread of the New Coronavirus
Infection (Part 11th)**

+Peace of the Lord

The government is considering on declaring a state of emergency for Osaka and Hyogo prefectures as the whole Archdiocese of Osaka is in the season of Easter.

The number of infected people in Wakayama Prefecture is also on the rise. Compared to the emergency declaration made in January this year, this emergency declaration calls for stronger control of the movements of the people. Together with our concerted effort, we would like to contribute to this effort of overcoming the infection.

In the tenth document, we were reminded that the Lord's Day Mass is not an unnecessary gathering, but a necessary one. The Sunday Mass is an important ministry for us, but the spread of the disease has become an urgent situation that threatens human life. For this reason, we want to control the flow of people in the church.

The onslaught of the new coronavirus has walked close to us, changing from a conventional virus to a mutated virus with increased infectivity. As you know, the number of people infected in the three prefectures of the Osaka Diocese is on the rise. We are praying for an early end to the disease in our daily prayers, but the coronavirus is changing its form and eating away at our lives. In light of this situation, we would like to make the following announcement.

1. In areas where a **state of emergency** has been declared, **PUBLIC MASSES WILL BE CANCELLED**. However, due to the urgency of this announcement, it may be difficult to notify the congregation. In that case, please cancel the public Mass on Sunday, April 25, if possible.
2. Please follow the "Guidelines for Infectious Diseases in the Catholic Church in Japan" released by the Japan Catholic Bishops Conference on November 1, 2020.
3. During the period of the public Mass cancellation, all believers in the Diocese of Osaka will be exempted from the obligation to attend Mass on the Lord's Day. We encourage each person to spend time at home reading the Bible, praying the Rosary, etc.
4. Pastors of their respective parishes are requested to make every effort to provide pastoral care to the faithful through various other means, while avoiding direct contact as much as possible, even in the midst of the cancellation of public Masses.

If the situation changes, such as the cancellation of the emergency declaration, we will notify you again.

This Notice will also be translated in major foreign languages and will be posted in the official website of the Archdiocese.