

March 27, 2020

Dear Catholic Sendai Diocesan Parishioners,

Precautionary Measures Concerning COVID-19 from 4th April and Beyond

The spread of infections and serious cases due to COVID-19 have been reported one after another, and Church activities such as public masses have been suspended in different parts of the world. Fortunately, in Tohoku region, the number of people infected is not increasing. However, even if these cases have been identified in different areas, the spread of the virus is unpredictable. Furthermore, considering the situation in Japan, it is difficult to stop the increase in the number of infected people.

In light of these circumstances, kindly take note of the following specific precautionary measures from 4th April and beyond:

1. All parishioners are dispensed from their obligations to attend Sunday Mass **From April 4 (Saturday) to May 1 (Friday)**. However, we encourage everyone to continue their personal connection with the Lord through reading the Scriptures and personal prayers.
 2. On the other hand, the priests have decided to give communion to those who wish to receive it in their parishes on Sunday Masses.
 3. The Holy Week liturgy will not be celebrated in public.
 4. The scheduled baptism for Easter Virgil in different parishes and districts will be postponed. You can discuss this with your parish priest.
 5. Concerning weddings and funerals, consult with the priest in charge and the person concerned on taking adequate precautionary measures against infections before proceeding as usual.
 6. For events other than masses, as much as possible kindly consider postponing or canceling them, except only for small gatherings. In case of holding such events, in addition to hand disinfection, kindly provide sufficient ventilation, keep a distance between each other, and try to finish as quickly as possible.
 7. We hope that this announcement will be given to the parishioners in various ways by April 4 (Saturday). Likewise, inform the foreign parishioners as much as possible.
- ✧ The decision was made after a thorough reflection and discussion during the board meeting last March 23. Nevertheless, we will make an announcement again in the middle of April after taking into consideration the situation and advices from experts.

Fr. Shiro Komatsu
Administrator
Catholic Sendai Diocese