



Українська Православна Церква св. Юрія
St. George Ukrainian Orthodox Church

COVID-19
— Update —

December 23, 2020
St. Ioasaph, Bp. of Bilhorod

“For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us.” – Romans 8:18

Glory to Jesus Christ!

Dear brothers and sisters in Christ,

As the COVID-19 pandemic continues, as was announced on Monday, December 21, 2020 by Ontario’s Premier Doug Ford, we are entering a mandatory province-wide lockdown for a minimum of 28 days, beginning on Saturday, December 26, 2020.

Due to these new and restrictive measures, our temple will once again be closed to in-person worship. With the sounding of this announcement, we enter yet another lockdown in hopes of gaining control over this virus. We must remember that we are only asked to restrict our movements and interactions with people, no one has forced us to give up our faith. Although the manner in which we praise God might change for a short time, our own personal faith should not weaken.

During this time of year many of us would be busy preparing our houses to receive guests, decorating, preparing menus, and shopping for gifts. All of this has been set aside for the best, to preserve God’s world and all of us. With this new found quietness, and slower pace we are given an opportunity to reflect upon ourselves, to dwell within Christ, to renew or build upon our faith. Perhaps this is even a good opportunity to begin and strengthen a daily prayer rule and to read an Akathist.

We all recognize that nothing compares to worshiping in-person in our beloved temple. We will begin once again, while our doors are closed, to live-stream our services on our YouTube channel. Unite with us in prayer throughout this Nativity

Season!

This mandatory Lockdown extends past the feast of Theophany of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. The blessing of the 'Jordan' waters will still take place. Distribution of Holy Water will occur once the lockdown has ended. Along with the feast of Theophany any of you who wished to have their houses blessed might still have the opportunity after the Lockdown. This is still under consideration.

As many of you have already received your Christmas mailing from the church, I humbly must ask you, that while we are not gathering in person to worship, to remember that the costs associated with maintaining the physical building do not diminish. Please consider mailing in your donation, dropping it off in the rectory mailbox as you run essential errands or make a donation through Paypal.

All of us were looking forward to the Nativity Season, joining together in prayer together in church; none of us saw this lockdown coming even a week ago. We are all preparing and adjusting to it the best we can. We must listen to the science of our Medical Officers who tell us what we need to do to be safe and to stay healthy.

Do not lose heart and, guided by the truth of Christ's Nativity in the flesh, continue your path through life with hope. Trials are important in our lives too – they educate us and bring us closer to God and to each other. If we look at them from this perspective, we will certainly remain calm, learn something, and enrich ourselves spiritually. May God grant us to overcome this trial and its consequences as swiftly as possible, so that we can come out of it stronger!

God is with us!

Fr. Gregory Mielnik