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To the Faithful of the Diocese of Kyoto

New Coronavirus (COVID - 19) Infections
Precautionary Measures for suspension of Mass etc. (Part 3)
Correspondence after April 5

After hearing the New Coronavirus Infectious Disease Control Experts Conference, the Japanese government's announcement on March 20 and the opinions of the Catholic Medical Association, as to how to avoid further infection due to coronavirus, we inform you that,

1. *From April 5 (Sunday) the Passion of the Lord to Sunday, until April 19 (Sunday) 2nd Sunday Easter*, we extend the suspension of all Masses (Para Liturgy or commonly known as Liturgy of the Word with Communion), catechisms, lectures and gatherings of an unspecified number of people. *The priests in charge of the block will observe the Holy Week and Easter Liturgical celebrations without the congregation*, the faithful are encourage to join in the liturgy in hearts and in prayers. The faithful are asked to read the Biblical Readings of the day, to cherish and meditate the Lord's Paschal Mystery. You can also watch via live stream the celebration of the rite of the Archdiocese of Tokyo. <https://tokyo.catholic.jp/>

2. The scheduled sacrament of baptism for the catechumens, and the rite of acceptance to the community this Easter is postponed. However, if there is a need for a catechumen to be baptized on that day it could be done only after consultation with the priest in charge, provided that it will only be Sacrament of Baptism, to be attended by few people.

3 Weddings, funerals, etc. *can be conducted on a small scale only* after having consulted the priest in charge / person concerned about adequate infection control measures, and provided that (1) *there are proper ventilation*, (2) *maintaining 2 meters apart*, (3) *singing or talking at short distances are not allowed to prevent infection through droplets, and provided that the celebration is not within the Mass.*

4. *After having been assessed the situation of the outbreak, another memorandum will be issued for April 20 (Monday) and onwards.*

As community of believers, we may not be able to observe the Holy Week and Easter celebrations, which is the most important events of the year. But I want you to make this difficult situation an opportunity to be in solidarity with those who are in distress, because they are infected and lockdown in their houses. In whatever circumstances, we renew our faith in the Risen Lord Jesus who is always with us. We pray that the world maybe at peace and that this pandemic has come to an end the soonest time possible.

March 26, 2020
Most Rev. Paul Otsuka Yoshinao D.D.
Bishop of Kyoto