

CATHOLIC KYOTO DIOCESE

Catholic Chancery Office

Ichijoden-cho 502-1
Kamigyo-ku, Kyoto,
602-0934 JAPAN
TEL: -81-75-366-3629
FAX: -80-75-366-3598

カトリック京都司教区

〒604-8006
京都市上京区一条殿町 502-1
TEL: (075)366-3629
FAX:(075)366-3568
E-mail: Curia@kyoto.catholic.jp

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STEPS TAKEN BY THE KYOTO DIOCESE REGARDING NEW CORONAVIRUS (NO. 9) SUSPENSION OF MASSES IN SOUTHERN KYOTO

Dear Brother and Sister Catholics in the southern district of the Kyoto Diocese:

With Christmas, the year-end and New Year holidays ahead, the new coronavirus continues to spread nationwide. On the 17th of this month, the governor of Kyoto called on us to refrain from unnecessary and non-urgent movement. In Kyoto Prefecture, especially in Kyoto City and the Yamashiro and Otokuni districts, the number of new patients has increased dramatically in the past week, and medical experts have determined that the infection is widespread throughout the city.

Most people are asymptomatic and mildly ill, but there is a risk of unknowingly infecting others. The number of middle-aged and elderly people with severe illness is increasing, and hospital beds are running short. Therefore, special care must be taken during the year-end and New Year holidays. For Christmas Mass, please limit the number of people and take the utmost measures to prevent infection.

Therefore, from December 27 (Feast of the Holy Family) to January 10 (Feast of the Baptism of the Lord) Sunday Masses will be suspended for the entire southern area of the Kyoto Diocese.

Sunday Masses are sometimes celebrated on weekdays, and so all public Masses will be suspended from Saturday, December 26, to Monday, January 11.

These restrictions are limited to the southern part of the Kyoto Diocese. Please understand that this is an urgent instruction for the protection of all life and for solidarity with healthcare professionals.

I will inform you about the resumption of Mass after January 12 based on the situation on January 8.

Let us celebrate the birth of the Lord praying for the blessing of the infant Jesus. We pray that God the Father bless all with safety and well-being. Please take care of yourself.

✠Paul Yoshinao Otsuka
Bishop of Kyoto