



Archbishop of Kota Kinabalu

PASTORAL CARE UNDER MOVEMENT CONTROL ORDER

23rd March 2020

To: All Priests, Religious, and Lay People

As you are well aware, our nation has been placed under a Movement Control Order (MCO) made under the Prevention and Control of Infectious Diseases Act 1988 and Police Act 1965, which has been enforced since last 18th of March, and to be in effect until this 31st March 2020 (the restriction period).

In the light of the additional restrictions in movement and activities imposed by the MCO, I have decided to issue further directives in compliance with the above Order to ensure that pastoral care for the faithful is not unduly impeded nor unnecessarily disrupted.

The additional measures will be taken with immediate effect and will be reviewed as we approach the end of the restriction period.

1. Suspension of all public weekend and weekday Masses, gatherings, meetings, catechism classes and RCIA sessions from 14 March to 1 April 2020 shall be upheld, as decided and promulgated through the Press Statement dated 14 March 2020.
2. All churches and chapels shall be closed in compliance with MCO.
3. All should prayerfully follow the televised private Masses at home particularly on Sundays and continue making spiritual communion during this period.
4. All priests are asked to celebrate their own private Masses.
5. The archdiocesan and parish offices shall be closed to the public during the restriction period but parishes should make available hotlines to attend to emergencies requiring pastoral care and support. The archdiocesan and parish staff are to work from home.
6. Sacraments of Penance (Confession), Anointing of the Sick and Viaticum (Communion for the dying) will be reserved strictly for critical cases. Contact the parish hotlines and provide details. Holy Communion for the homebound who are not in critical condition, shall be deferred till after the restriction period.



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7. Couples who are scheduled to be married in the months of April, May, June, this year, should contact their Parish Priest to discuss their plans in accordance with the MCO restrictions.
8. Funerals will have to comply strictly with guidelines and restrictions issued by the Ministry of Health and the Church authorities. Contact the parish priest for details.
9. We call upon all ministries, groups, and local communities in the parishes to mobilize their joint resources, in collaboration with their respective Parish Priests and Parish Pastoral Councils, to care for the needs of the vulnerable, the elderly, the sick, those who are living alone, those who have been seriously affected financially by this crisis, and the family members of health-care providers who are in the frontline battling the epidemic.

Precisely because we cannot meet, let us seize this extraordinary opportunity to pray more for each other, imploring the intercession of Mary the Mother of the Church, to be more united in mercy, forgiveness, and charity, through Christ Jesus our Lord.

“For I am certain of this; neither death nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nothing already in existence and nothing still to come, nor any power, nor the heights nor the depths, nor any created thing whatever, will be able to come between us and the love of God, known to us in Christ Jesus our Lord.” (Rm 8:38-39).

Your devotedly,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'John Wong', written over a large, stylized circular flourish.

Archbishop John Wong