



天主教澳門教區

DIOCESE DE MACAU

Catholic Diocese of Macau Pastoral Letter

In Times of Adversity, Greater Love is Shown

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

Our city of Macau, China, and the rest of the world are confronting the novel Coronavirus epidemic. At this critical, painful moment, let us be of one heart in overcoming this epidemic, and not forget to exercise that most sublime and strongest virtue for humanity in the world -- Love:

“Love is patient and kind; love is not jealous or boastful; it is not arrogant or rude. Love does not insist on its own way; it is not irritable or resentful; it does not rejoice at wrong, but rejoices in the right. Love bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things” (1 Corinthians 13:4-7).

“Love is patient; love is kind”.

As the current epidemic is still developing, there seems to be a shortage of day to day medical and sanitising supplies in the market, and we have also heard of some instances where people have become aggressive and agitated when buying masks, sanitisers, and even food. There can be an atmosphere of conflict, impatience, discontent, and frustration. I totally understand these feelings, but at the same time I urge people to remain calm and be patient. We know that all the government departments have sought to respond promptly to the epidemic, working tirelessly throughout the Lunar New Year holidays to study the situation and to implement policies with their best efforts in a spirit of selfless sacrifice. Nevertheless, as the virus outbreak spread at such a rapid rate, there are bound to be some aspects of the response that fall short of the ideal when it comes to handling the crisis, and we strongly believe that things are on the mend. This is a golden opportunity for us to be trustful with and helpful to one another: “Love bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things”.



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I hope that as individuals and as a community we will all be actively carrying out the preventive measures in place in full cooperation with the government. We should support all our government departments and voluntary agencies, especially the medical staff and personnel working on the frontline to contain the spread of the epidemic. We should express our gratitude, appreciation, and encouragement towards the medical professionals for their spirit of sacrifice by whatever means we are able. I would also ask you not to pass around counter-productive or downright baseless messages about the epidemic so as to avoid unnecessary panic among our fellow citizens.

We must bear in mind that the purpose of the extension of the Lunar New Year holidays is to contain the spread of the epidemic. Therefore let us exercise self-discipline, avoid foreign travel and group activities. Let us make good use of our time at home to grow closer to our family members by listening and talking more to each other. Students also need to be self-disciplined, cultivating a studious attitude of learning and reading. The faithful are encouraged to read the Bible and other spiritual texts, avoid leading a sort of listless life at home, idle the whole time. It is important that we maintain the health of body, mind and spirit, and not fall victim to the virus of spiritual laziness.

During this time of infection prevention, I invite all Christians to recite the Prayer of St. Roque for his intercession:

O Almighty God and Father of the poor, since You did strengthen St. Roque by Your divine grace to help the sick with admirable way of curing them, grant us your mercy through the merits of St. Roque, that we may be spared from all sickness and contagion through his intercession, and that we may receive the grace to be delivered from the greatest evil, which is mortal sin; so that after the trials of this life we may be worthy to be admitted into your eternal glory in heaven through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Lastly, may God bless us and keep us whole in body, mind and in spirit, may we be inspired by God's love for mankind, and let us work together to overcome this epidemic, doing so with Christian peace and joy, as, filled with love, we seek to build up our common home during this difficult period of time.

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