

**The 18th LETTER OF THE BISHOP ON THE PRECAUTIONARY MEASURES
FOR PREVENTING FROM THE COVID 19 INFECTIONS**

The Right Reverend Mario Yamanouchi, Bishop of Saitama
March 19th, 2021

**Re: Responding to the Lifting of the “The Second Emergency Measures”
by the Japanese Government.**

It was announced by the Government that the “The Second Emergency Measures” will be lifted on March 21st. Responding to this Announcement by the Government,

The suspension of the celebrating the mass with the congregations will be lifted on Sunday, March 21st. You will, thus, be asked to take the Parish activities following the “Precautions Measures” on my 14th Letter for the time being.

The announcement made by the Government this time does not guarantee the end of the spreading of the Covid 19. Rather, we should continue to be more cautions by making all the efforts to prevent from the further spreading of that virus, e.g., by keeping social distancing, as the special time of the year will be coming when the peoples’ movements and traffic may increase.

The three general instructions for the time being

- 1. The masses with the congregations will be allowed to celebrate just once on Sundays, in addition once every Saturday evening (as the Sunday vigil mass).**
- 2. The masses with the congregations will only be allowed to celebrate in Japanese, or in Japanese with the part of the readings and/or the part of the prayer of the faithful in the foreign languages.**
- 3. You will be asked to suspend the parish activities except the absolute necessary meetings for running or maintaining the parish (including the funerals).**

(You will receive my further instructions in case the increase of the spreading of the Covid 19 gets to the serious level.)

The special instructions for the Holy Week liturgies

Palm Sunday of the Passion of the Lord: The procession of the congregation will not be taken place.

Holy Thursday of the Lord's Supper: The Washing of Feet will be suspended.

Holy Friday of the Passion of the Lord: During the Adoration of the Holy Cross, the procession of the congregation will not be taken place.

The Easter Vigil in the Holy Night: During the *Lucernarium* (the Blessing of the Fire and Preparation of the Candle), the congregation will be asked to wait inside the church and to welcome the Light, not taking part in the procession.

Mass during the Day at Easter: You will be allowed to celebrate the mass twice on Easter Sunday, only if you can follow thoroughly the precautions measures for preventing from the Covid 19 Infections.

Thank you very much for your understanding and your cooperation.