



South Sudan Council of Churches (SSCC), P. O BOX 209 Juba, South Sudan.

Tuesday 24th March 2020.

PASTORAL MESSAGE TO THE PEOPLE OF SOUTH SUDAN:

Dear Faithful and People of God in South Sudan,

The World Health Organization (WHO) *risk assessment* indicates a very *high risk* worldwide including our Country the Republic of South Sudan. The declaration of the disease as a Pandemic means countries have to take serious and effective action to fight and prevent the Pandemic - Corona virus (COVID-19). As the Council of Churches in South Sudan, we have listened and observed and sensed the need to take this opportunity to reach out to you our constituents, with this message in the hope that it will be helpful to all Church Leaders in stepping up the necessary care for members of our congregations, communities and collectively the nation as a whole. We also have interacted with brethren (Ecumenical fraternity) in various countries and wish to clean from their wisdom in giving guidance for the decisions and actions we take.

1. Prayer and Fasting:

Seeking God's protection and intervention in prayer, and fasting individually cannot be overemphasized. As we do so, we have to take all necessary precautions to stop the spread of the virus; ensure we do not put others at risk, help those in need and keep self and family safe.

2. Government Directives:

Government has the authority, infrastructure and mandate to protect and rule over the nation (including the Church). Their pronouncements and regulations to containing the Corona virus (COVID-19) are coming expeditiously through the Ministry of Health and presidential directives, with expert advice. The Church will comply and help the Government to contain the spread of the virus.

3. Closure of Places of Worship and Fellowship:

The Ministry of Health in the Republic of South Sudan , in its Advisory on Corona Virus (COVID-19) states that: "The Ministry of Health advises the General Public that All Social gatherings like Sporting events, Religious events, Social/Cultural and Political events must be called off to minimize possible exposure to the risk of COVID-19 infection."¹

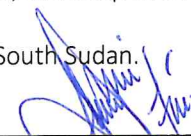
Places of worship and fellowship meant for Religious events and schools will remain close, in order to avoid the spread of the virus COVID-19. We must also be particularly aware exactly what we normally do, is what we should not do now if we want to protect life. We value togetherness in Worship and Christian fellowship. However, we believe it is the right gesture to suspend worship and fellowship services as directed by the National Government and the Ministry of Health for thirty days. In this regard we commend to all the CHURCH and people in South Sudan for these practical advices and recommendations.

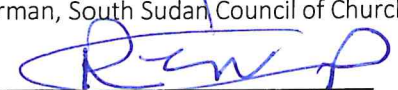
¹ Advisory Note from Ministry of Health, Republic of South Sudan, 20th March 2020.




South Sudan Council of Churches (SSCC) is committed to the health and safety of our people in the Republic of South Sudan. South Sudan Council of Churches (SSCC) will encourage the Christian faithful to pray and to adhere to the directives of the Government regarding the fight against this global pandemic Corona Virus [COVID-19]. Member Churches have also given directives to the Church fellowship about the risk and methods of containing the virus.² We will be focusing on the essentials through continuous Prayers and Fasting according to the words of Apostle St. Paul in his first Letter to the Christians of Corinth: "Three things will last forever - Faith, Hope and Love - and the greatest of these is Love." (1 Corinthians 13:13). God of Life, lead us to Peace, Healing, Forgiveness, Justice, Reconciliation, and keep us safe both in HEALTH, MIND and BODY.

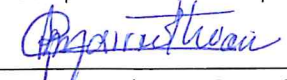
O God Bless South Sudan.

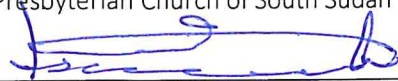

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The Most Rev. Dr. Justin BADI ARAMA
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The Most Rev. Msgr. Dr. Stephen AMEYU MARTIN
Metropolitan Archbishop of JUBA, Catholic Church.


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Fr. James OYET LATANSIO
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² The Most Rev. Dr. Justin BADI ARAMA, Directives from the Office of the Primate and Metropolitan Bishop of JUBA, 23rd March 2020; Fr. Samuel ABE JOSEPH, Suspension of Public Prayers and Schools, 23rd March 2020.