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DIOCESE OF FUKUOKA

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Fukuoka, May 7, 2021

To all the faithful of the Diocese of Fukuoka

Dear brothers and sisters:

Traditionally in the Catholic Church the month of May is the month dedicated to Mary. This year Pope Francis has proposed to the entire church the daily recitation of the holy rosary imploring the end of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Throughout the month of May, every day at six in the afternoon Rome time (one in the morning the next day in Japan) the recitation of the Holy Rosary from some Marian shrines will be broadcast through the Vatican media. Most representative Shrines of the world have been of the world chosen. Among them are the Basilica of the Annunciation in Nazareth (day 4), Our Lady of Peace and Good Voyage in the Philippines (day 7), Holy Virgin of the Rosary of Fatima in Portugal (day 13); Our Lady of Lourdes in France; (day 18) Our Lady of Nagasaki in Japan (day 21); Our Lady of Guadalupe in Mexico (day 26). For those of us who live in Japan it is difficult to participate in that hour, but we can reserve some time of the day to pray, alone or in a group or family, the holy rosary with this intention. I strongly recommend it to all.

In recent days I have been asked several times about the **criteria to follow in the face of the new wave of COVID-19 contamination**. We will follow the same criteria that have guided us so far. I remember them briefly.

1. If a state of emergency (*Kinkyu jitai sengen*) is declared, the celebration of Mass with the attendance of the faithful will be suspended. The Mass will be broadcast online from the cathedral.
2. As long as the state of emergency is not declared, we will continue with the celebration of Mass with the assistance of the faithful. I ask that you faithfully comply with the standards that have been given so far.
3. If the government issues some special measures, without reaching the declaration of a state of emergency, to prevent the spread of contamination, we will continue the celebration of Mass with the attendance of the faithful. In this case, I recommend that elderly people and those who suffer from some type of chronic illness join in the prayer of the community from their own homes, although their participation in the Mass will not be prohibited. The obligation to attend Mass is dispensed during that time.
4. If any special circumstance arises, I ask that you contact the secretariat of the diocese.

I wholeheartedly implore the end of the COVID-19 pandemic. May the Lord bless you.



Josep M. Abella, cmf. – Bishop of Fukuoka Diocese