**+ St Mark of Ephesus Orthodox Cathedral Parish Nurse Ministry-April 2020**

" Angels are a light for monks and monastic life a light for all men. Hence monks should spare no effort to become a shining example in all things and they should give no scandal to anything they say or do. For if the light becomes dark, then all the deeper will be the darkness of those living in the world" --St John Climacus

Recently, Metropolitan Demetrius shared missives to the faithful on the current state of challenges and affairs, reminding us that the church is our hospital. We pray our ever-merciful Lord continues to give strength to our spiritual leaders to guide us through these perilous times.

We have the blessing of these earthly lights, and our Lord's Resurrection shines on us the Light of Eternity.

Right now, we are going through physical, emotional and spiritual experiences many of us have never had to live through before. And thank our ever merciful-Lord we have our Orthodoxy and the church as our succor and aid.

**Here are a few suggestions to keep our health strong** as we experience this current situation. In a recent article in Consumer Reports on Health: research found that we need at least **7-8 hours of sleep**. Keep in mind that as we age, the sleep-wake patterns may change.

We should be **exercising at least 150 minutes per week**; this includes aerobic activity such as brisk walking and muscle strengthening as well as balance training (which can be done in the home).

Dietary guidelines suggest women should have at least 1800 calories a day and men 2000 calories a day. We should have at least 5-10 servings of fruit and vegetables a day which has been shown to reduce the risk of stroke and heart attacks. And we should reduce our alcohol intake to 1-2 glasses a day. A Lancet study found that just one drink a day raised the risk diseases such as cancer.

These are guidelines and suggestions from relevant research to maintain healthy lifestyles. It was also shared that there are real issues of being in emotional binds as we now have restrictions on our mobility for our safety and for the public safety.  We truly have become such a mobile society, but I think it is a time to take a deep breath and reassess our hectic and, in many cases, stressful lives. I think we are creatures of habits and routines and being homebound it might be a way of developing a routine of our spirituality perhaps following and adapting monastic rules. I've often thought of the prayer rope as being a lifeline to get us to shore in life’s storm-tossed seas.

There are also issues of self-care and health as shared in the information shared above and family time this has truly been a blessing in many ways where are families share basically the same schedules and do things we did as young people such as board games and puzzles, finally being able to read that book we've set aside and even learning a new skill! It is a blessing just having time to sit and communicate as a family.

Of course during these difficult times we should never forget we are our brothers keepers, so if there are those in need or distress (including elderly housebound neighbors) please give them a call or send a card to let them know they are being thought of. Of course, we are uncharted territory with the COVID-19 virus, so please keep hygienic lifestyles washing hands and keeping safe distances from one another as it is a very infectious virus.

And as always if you experience any changes in your health and wellbeing, please contact your health care provider.

Love in Christ,

Elizabeth Ashton RN

[**Cleaning & Disinfection Guidance from the CDC**](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/cleaning-disinfection.html)

**To disinfect:**  
Most common EPA-registered household disinfectants will work. Use disinfectants appropriate for the surface.

**Options include:**

* **Diluting your household bleach.**  
  To make a bleach solution, mix:

**1 gallon**

Add 5 tablespoons (1/3rd cup) bleach per gallon of water  
**1 quart**

4 teaspoons bleach per quart of water

Follow manufacturer’s instructions for application and proper ventilation. Check to ensure the product is not past its expiration date. ***Never mix household bleach with ammonia or any other cleanser***. Unexpired household bleach will be effective against coronaviruses when properly diluted.

* **Alcohol solutions.**Ensure solution has at least 70% alcohol.
* **Other common EPA-registered household disinfectants.**  
  Products with [EPA-approved emerging viral pathogens pdf icon[7 pages]external icon](https://www.epa.gov/pesticide-registration/list-n-disinfectants-use-against-sars-cov-2) claims are expected to be effective against COVID-19 based on data for harder to kill viruses. Follow the manufacturer’s instructions for all cleaning and disinfection products (e.g., concentration, application method and contact time, etc.).