



Holy Apostolic Catholic Assyrian Church of the East | ܩܘܪܕܝܘܨܬܐ ܕܩܘܪܕܝܘܨܬܐ ܕܩܘܪܝܢܐ ܕܩܘܪܝܢܐ ܕܩܘܪܝܢܐ ܕܩܘܪܝܢܐ ܕܩܘܪܝܢܐ

Archdiocese of Australia, New Zealand & Lebanon

Archbishopric: 25 Edinburgh Circuit, Cecil Hills NSW 2171 Australia

(t) +61 2 9822 1134 (f) +61 2 9822 1132 (e) archbishop@assyrianchurch.org.au

7 March 2020

**STATEMENT FROM HIS EMINENCE MAR MEELIS ZAIA AM METROPOLITAN TO  
THE ARCHDIOCESE OF AUSTRALIA, NEW ZEALAND AND LEBANON  
CONCERNING THE CORONAVIRUS**

To the faithful members of the Assyrian Church of the East, Archdiocese of Australia, New Zealand and Lebanon,

Dear Members,  
Blessings of the Lord with you all,

In light of the recent international spread of the coronavirus we are releasing this statement to direct your attention to the canons of the Holy Apostolic Catholic Assyrian Church of the East with regards to the partaking in the Body and Blood of our Lord Jesus Christ during the Eucharistic Services.

First and foremost, the partaking of the bread (i.e. the Body of Christ) must be taken using hands. The faithful are to present their hands in the sign of a cross, placing their right hand over their left hand at a ninety-degree angle. The officiating priest then places the Bread in the hands of the faithful. One must not move until they have consumed the Bread into their mouths whilst standing before the priest. Then are free to move on.

Considering the Bread has been dipped into the wine (i.e. Blood of Christ), the faithful are free to partake in the cup or not without feeling at fault.

If one wishes to partake in the wine and drink from the cup, they must do so without touching the cup itself as per the canons of the Holy Church.

Let us come together in prayer and supplicate to our God and Lord Jesus Christ that healing and comfort may come to all these affected by the virus, and that this may pass from this world hastily through the prayers of the Virgin Mary, Saint Hurmizd, St George the Martyr and all the saints, amen.

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ upon you all.

Mar Meelis Zaia AM  
Archbishop of Australia, New Zealand & Lebanon