

## Coronavirus

Our thoughts and prayers are with all those infected by the Coronavirus in China and around the world, for those who care for them, for health specialists and authorities who are combating the spread of infection, and of course for all who at this time are feeling anxious, especially for those with friends and family in the infected countries and here in New Zealand.

### **What can we do to minimise the chance of infection?**

Germs can live on surfaces for hours. To protect yourself and others:

- Always carry tissues with you and use them to catch your coughs or sneezes.
- Bin the tissue and wash your hands with soap and water or use a sanitiser gel.
- Ensure good regular cleaning of surfaces that people touch regularly.

### **What will happen in our Parish?**

While it is our faith that the sacraments are a means of grace and not of sickness, they are physically ministered, and we should take physical care. As well as the specific concern about Coronavirus, this advice is generally applicable for all infectious diseases.

#### **1. If you have a cold or feel unwell, please stay at home.**

#### **2. Wash Hands**

Washing hands is extremely important in lowering the risk of spreading disease. Our Priests presiding at the Eucharist, Eucharistic Ministers, Altar Servers and Sacristans are reminded to wash hands. Please use hand sanitizers, wipes and gloves that have been provided.

#### **3. Holy Communion in one Kind.**

From the week-end 7/8 March, there will be communion under only one kind – the host. This will be handed to each person. Taking the host via the tongue will **not** be available.

#### **4. Visitation**

Pastoral visitors to homes and hospitals should observe all precautions in personal hygiene before and after such visits.

#### **5. Ministry of the Sick with Eucharist**

As mentioned above, observe all precautions in personal hygiene. If the spread of the Coronavirus increases, Communion to the Sick will be suspended. Until then, if the person is old, infirmed, or seriously ill only take communion if it is required.

#### **6. Sign of Peace**

Until this crisis has passed, please refrain from shaking hands at the sign of peace.

If this virus continues to grow and begins to impact our daily lives, decisions regarding weekday and Sunday Masses will be addressed.

The health and safety of our parishioners, priests, staff, and the wider community is our top priority.

Anyone who has travelled in the previous 14 days who develops symptoms of fever, cough or shortness of breath should seek medical advice by first phoning Healthline's dedicated COVID-19 number 0800 358 5453 or contacting their GP by phoning ahead of their visit.

The Ministry of Health is closely monitoring the situation and following guidance from the World Health Organization.

For COVID-19 health advice and information, contact the Healthline team (for free) on 0800 358 5453 or +64 9 358 5453 for international SIMS, or see the latest health advice on the Ministry of Health website.

## **KEY CONTACTS**

### **Healthline**

Healthline has set up a dedicated 0800 number specifically for health-related calls about COVID-19 (novel coronavirus):

- The number is 0800 358 5453
- Or for international SIMs +64 9 358 5453
- The Healthline existing number 0800 611 116 is still the main number to call for non-COVID-19 health concerns.

Healthline has translators and interpreters available 24/7 in 150 languages including Mandarin and Cantonese.

### **Public Health Units/District Health Boards**

If you need to contact your public health officer:

<https://www.health.govt.nz/new-zealand-health-system/key-health-sector-organisations-and-people/public-health-units/public-health-unit-contacts>

### **New Zealand Immigration**

Keep updated on travel restrictions through the New Zealand Immigration website:

<https://www.health.govt.nz/new-zealand-health-system/key-health-sector-organisations-and-people/public-health-units/public-health-unit-contacts>