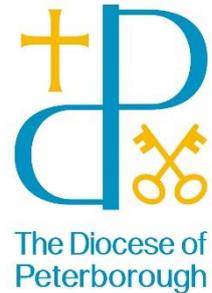


COVID-19 CORONAVIRUS: TEMPORARY REGULATIONS

From Bishop Donald

11 March 2020



Last month I issued instructions and guidance for hygiene at Holy Communion. Those have permanent effect.

This notice concerns the current covid-19 coronavirus outbreak. These are instructions which the clergy and churchwardens must implement, but they are temporary, and will be lifted when life returns to normal.

- Those giving out books or papers as people enter church, must have hygienically clean hands, in the same way as the ministers of Communion. Only the minimum necessary items should be given out.
- Greetings at the door, at the peace, and after the service, should not involve touching or very close contact. The peace can be shared with a nod, a smile, appropriate words, or in other ways, but without touching. This will be easier if people stay in their places, turning and looking around, rather than crowding into narrow spaces.
- No touching also means no laying on of hands or other touching for those receiving a blessing rather than Communion. Words, with the sign of the cross from a short distance, must suffice.
- The wine will not be shared at Holy Communion. The priest (or minister at Communion by Extension), will drink a small amount, saying aloud something like “The blood of Christ, shed for us all”, but only the bread will be offered to communicants. As they introduce this practice, the clergy will make clear that all the benefits of Communion are received when only bread is shared.
- Refreshments can continue to be served, but with sensible hygiene precautions, and without people crowding together too closely.
- Pastoral care will be very important during this outbreak. Clergy and others should make sure that the needs of the lonely and the isolated are met as far as possible. However, if clergy or lay ministers are told to self-isolate they must do so, and if parishioners are self-isolating the clergy must not visit them, but should be in contact by phone or electronic media. Hospital visits should follow any advice or instructions given by hospital staff.

Please pray for all those affected in any way by this outbreak.
With all good wishes

+ Donald