



STATEMENT

DIOCESAN WIDE APPROACH TO COVID-19 UPDATE

Date: 4 March 2020

Statement from Bishop Tim Harris regarding the ongoing COVID-19 situation

There has been a lot of discussion in the media about the COVID-19 virus, and it's understandable that many people feel concerned. At this stage it's important to remember that public health advice has not recommended any major changes to the way we live our lives.

Our concern is for the ongoing good health of you; our employees, volunteers and parishioners. Today I have met with all heads of agencies including Catholic Education, Centacare, Mary MacKillop Childcare North Queensland and Saints Catholic College and we have been planning for any increase in alert levels and will be sending regular updates to you by email to keep you informed, please find the current update attached. Each agency is responding to their individual circumstances, operational requirements and coordinating this with their particular stakeholders.

Unless otherwise advised, masses and other gatherings are expected to continue as normal, however all parishioners and visitors are encouraged to observe a high level of caring for one another including not attending if feeling unwell and not feeling offended if others do not wish to make physical contact such as shaking hands. I have released a Pastoral Statement outlining temporary changes to liturgical practices during this period of heightened awareness.

If you have any further workplace concerns, please speak with your manager. If you have health related concerns please contact the information line at 1800 020 080 or your GP. As always, if you are feeling unwell please take care of yourself by staying at home until you regain your health.

Kind Regards

MOST REV TIMOTHY J HARRIS
Bishop of Townsville