THE ROMAN CATHOLIC
ARCHDIOCESE OF PORT OF SPAIN
Health, Safety and Environment Team
c/o Archbishop's House, 27 Maraval Road, Port of Spain

UPDATED GUIDELINES
FOR
INFECTION PREVENTION

BULLETIN #33

Issued 12th January 2024

The World Health Organization (WHO) has declared the new COVID-19 variant JN.1 a "stand-alone variant of interest". This decision was prompted by the strain's rapidly increasingly spread and characteristics over other strains in circulation.

Though WHO assessed the global health risk of JN.1 as low, it warned that we in this geographical region need to be aware that COVID-19 and other pathogens may exacerbate respiratory disease season i.e. flu season October-May.

Given that we in the Southern Caribbean are vulnerable to many respiratory illnesses that originate in Europe and North America, we are susceptible to being affected by the illnesses that visitors from these temperate regions bring with them when they come to our area.

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Out of an abundance of caution, the HSE recommends that our parishes should exercise a high level of preventative care to minimize contracting any viral, respiratory illness. Each Parish Priest, in conjunction with the parish council/leadership team, may select from any or all of the COVID-19 preventative measures. For example, 'if you feel unwell, stay at home'.

Here are some other recommendations that should be considered:
1. All worshippers should engage in good respiratory, hand and personal hygiene.
2. All vulnerable persons should wear a well-fitting surgical or N95 face mask when indoors.
3. Hand-sanitizer solution should be made available at the entrances to the church and other buildings.
4. Windows and doors should be left open to ensure proper ventilation within the church and other buildings when occupied.
5. The sharing of Precious Blood is discouraged.

They will know we are Christians by our (demonstrative) love. Love of God. Love of self. Love of neighbour. Love, care and consideration for the vulnerable among us.

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