

From the Bishop of Manchester  
23 July 2009

Please read this letter first

## Flu Pandemic

The emerging flu pandemic is being monitored by the Diocesan Pandemic Advisory Group (DPAG), chaired by the Bishop of Middleton. This group advises the diocese on when to release the diocesan pandemic protocols which are designed to reduce the risk of infection at public worship and during pastoral visits. The group is monitoring national, regional and local conditions and is liaising with health authorities and statutory bodies.

Of course, it is entirely possible that the 2009 pandemic will have little impact. Swine Flu continues to be a mild disease for the vast majority of people and we pray that will continue to be the case.

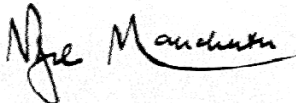
We do have to be ready in case the situation does deteriorate and the Diocesan Pandemic Advisory Group has advised me that the time has come for all parishes to prepare so that we can minimise the impact of any significant outbreak of pandemic flu.

The national church has also advised us that that time has come to withdraw the common cup at communion. This needs to happen as quickly as possible in this diocese.

You should read the Manchester Diocesan Pandemic Flu Protocols document and implement protocols 2,3,4,5 and 6. Protocols 2 and 3 cover basic hygiene protocols when visiting, protocol 4 will help you prepare further, protocol 5 tells you what to do if you have flu and protocol 6 deals with changes to public worship (withdrawal of the common cup and the peace). Leaflets and posters are available which should help explain to the congregation what is happening.

You will be notified by the Diocesan Pandemic Advisory Group, when, and if, other protocols should be implemented and if our status of alert changes. At present the North West of England shows signs of lower than average pandemic flu spread. This could change quickly in the next few weeks, so we need to be prepared and start making changes now.

Overleaf you will find a timetable for your parish. This may change in the coming weeks but it provides a basis for you to begin preparations.

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**The estimated timetable and tasks for 2009 look like this:**

- July      Read & implement - Protocol 1      *Standard hygiene practice- normal practice for public worship outside a pandemic situation*  
Read & implement - Protocol 2      *Hygiene when visiting the sick- normal practice outside a pandemic situation*  
Read & implement - Protocol 3      *General hygiene when visiting Hospitals- normal practice outside a pandemic situation*  
Read & implement - Protocol 4      *Preparing for a serious pandemic outbreak*  
Read & implement - Protocol 5      *Personal Behaviour (reducing the risk of flu and what to do if you have flu)*  
Read & implement - Protocol 6      *Public Worship (infection controls during a serious outbreak of pandemic flu)*  
Read Protocols 7 on infection controls during a serious outbreak of pandemic flu, and make sure they are understood by your key people.  
- Keep visiting [www.manchester.anglican.org/pandemic](http://www.manchester.anglican.org/pandemic) for updates.  
- Make sure you have already received the email newsletter *Pandemic e-news*. If you have not received it email your address to [dmarshall@manchester.anglican.org](mailto:dmarshall@manchester.anglican.org).
- Aug      the Diocesan Pandemic Advisory will continue to monitor the situation and decide if further protocols should be implemented.
- Sept      -Diocesan review and update these protocols if necessary.