

Kia ora e te whanau,

Further to recent correspondence yesterday, I am writing to you in regards to this ever-evolving Coronavirus (COVID19) situation. I want to reassure our community that our pandemic planning is thorough and our communication with our BOT, Aquinas College and St Thomas More is collaborative and responsive.

To aid future communication we will use our website and Facebook and please make sure your contact details are up to date. Please email Theresa and Karen in the office if you have any changes.

We are continuing to make our decisions based upon information from the Ministry of Health and Ministry of Education. We have been asked to review and reflect on how we promote physical distancing in our environment and the implications for our ability to teach and learn.

The trend in the official advice is increasingly restrictive and we should expect at some stage that this will affect our school.

I can inform you that St Marys is making preparations to provide online learning for your children with tasks that do not always require a device. This strategy is required in case of illness, self-isolation or school closure.

To remain clear St Marys is still open and will remain so until advised by either the Ministry of Health and/or Education.

Cancellations

Although we are continuing to carry on with as much as possible, the escalation of the situation means we are having to postpone and cancel many current and upcoming events.

Our decisions are made in the best interests of keeping our children and staff safe. We understand that these cancellations, postponements are disappointing to our students and families and we thank you for your support during this time. We have a strong mandate from Sport New Zealand and the local associations to cancel many of our sports for the rest of Term 1. This has already happened in some instances. We have now made the decision to withdraw our Volleyball, Waterpolo, and Flippa Ball teams immediately from their current competitions. This includes all practices with these sports.

This was also alongside a number of other sports doing the same yesterday. This has already been communicated to the associations and the families concerned. This is to align our thinking with Sport NZ and our sister school Aquinas College. All swimming at school will cease. We have taken precautions around Huis and Liturgies as stated in yesterday's communication.

The snorkeling for Yrs 5& 6 has just been canceled as we have taken medical advice and the sharing of equipment at this stage would not be sufficiently cleaned for sharing.

Seek Medical Advice

If you or a family member becomes unwell, the Ministry of Health recommends a conservative approach in terms of limiting contact with others and you should seek medical advice from your GP and contact MoH Healthline 0800 358 5453.

<https://www.health.govt.nz/our-work/diseases-and-conditions/covid-19-novel-coronavirus>

<https://covid19.govt.nz/>

Prayer in this time of Crisis:

Almighty and merciful God
Lover of the human race, healer of all our wounds
In whom there is no shadow of death
Save us in this time of crisis;
Grant wisdom and courage to our leaders;
Watch over all medical people
As they tend the sick and work for a cure;
Stir in us a sense of solidarity beyond isolation;
If our doors closed let our hearts be open
By the power of your love destroy the virus of fear, that hope may never die
And the light of Easter, the triumph of life,
May shine upon us and the whole world.
Through Jesus Christ, the Lord has risen from the dead,
Who lives and reigns forever and ever.
Amen
Holy Mary, the health of the sick, pray for us
St Joseph, the guardian of us all, pray for us.

We certainly acknowledge the challenges and anxiety created by the rate of change. At this time please remember and take the time to pray for others.

Kia Ora
James Murray
Principal