

**From Fr. Leonard:**

**I would like to summarize the most helpful comments regarding the COVID 19 reactions.**

**First from Fr. Vincent at St. Herman's in Edmonton:**

**This is not about fear – this is about an abundance of love towards those among us who are most vulnerable – the elderly, the young, the immuno-compromised. Right now, the risk of infection in Canada is considered "low". We need to do our part with these extra aggressive measures to keep that risk low.**

The long version is in a separate document. Please feel free to read for yourself.

This is a response to Fr. Herman regarding a specific reference to an article in the media that is less appropriate. It come from Deacon Peter Choi assigned to St. John of Shanghai & St. Nina of Georgia Orthodox Church. Dn Peter is well read and a professional in the health care system (physician).

**You mentioned that the Times article cited a study that suggests that the coronavirus may linger in the air. I've read the study and I offer the following comments.**

**The study provides valuable information on the potential duration that the coronavirus stays on surfaces (up to 2 to 3 days on plastic and stainless steel, up to 24 hours on cardboard, up to 4 hours on copper) and in the air (up to 3 hours when aerosolized).**

**To interpret the results properly, keep the following in mind:**

**1. At this moment, this study has not been peer reviewed or published. The Times article states the study is "published" in that it has been uploaded to a public repository of studies so researchers can quickly share information with each other. (This is a wonderful step in contrast to the usual competitiveness in research when one doesn't reveal much until submission to a journal to avoid competition.) So there may be some statements that might be challenged by other experts.**

**2. Most of the studies, cited by the researchers about aerosolization of the virus, were in hospital settings where healthcare providers were doing procedures that turn the droplets into aerosols. To date, in my limited knowledge of SARS and COVID-19, there has never been a consensus that the coronaviruses for these two illnesses were spread by aerosols in the community, At this moment, the WHO, the Public Health Agency of Canada, and the Centres for Disease Control have not released any statement recommending precautions against aerosols in the public setting. (We are doing this in health care environments where we can generate aerosols of the virus. The data on aerosols from this study will be helpful for those settings.)**

**I wish to caution us in mentioning that the coronavirus is spread as an aerosol in our conversations with others based on the considerations above until there is a statement from one of the public health agency. Precautions for infectious diseases spread by aerosols are a lot more intensive. If the coronavirus is spread by aerosol in non-health care settings, then we should all be wearing N95 masks. Furthermore, we shouldn't be holding services as the potential for spread would be incredibly high. (This would be like the spread of measles in an unvaccinated population. Measles is spread as an aerosol - highly contagious.) I just don't want people to panic and think public health authorities are hiding something about the virus.**

**As I mentioned to my parish, the hidden blessing of the COVID-19 pandemic is that it reminds us of our frailty and mortality and our need to cry out, "Lord, Jesus Christ, Son of God, have mercy on me!"**