

## St. Mary's Church

### Stewardship of the Body



“I give you thanks that I am fearfully, wonderfully made” (Ps. 139)

### The H1N1 Flu: Another Update

With the news that there are clusters of cases of H1N1 Flu in Walsh and Traill Counties, and with the approach of the start of school, here is another reminder of the care that should be taken to protect ourselves and family members from the flu.

The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services has published a technical report to provide guidance for school officials regarding the H1N1 flu. Parents and family members as well as school children from K-12 also should be made aware of the guidelines. Since we can't be with them to monitor them every minute, young people should be aware of how to protect themselves from the flu and what to do if they or a classmate becomes ill.

A summary of the guidelines are as follows:

- **Handwashing:** Hands should be washed frequently, particularly before eating, after sneezing or blowing the nose, and after using the restroom. Alcohol-based hand sanitizers are effective if soap and water are not available, but may not be allowed in the school. Non-alcohol sanitizers may also be used.
- **Respiratory etiquette:** Since flu viruses are thought to spread mainly from person to person in respiratory droplets or when droplets from a cough or sneeze of an infected person are propelled through the air and inhaled by people nearby, CDC recommends covering the nose and mouth with a tissue and then throwing the tissue in the trash after use. Coughing or sneezing into one's arm or sleeve and not into the hand is recommended. Plenty of tissues should be available to students at all times.
- **Isolation:** Sick students and staff must stay home. If a student arrives at school with symptoms of the flu, CDC is recommending that the student be separated from other students immediately and sent home as soon as possible. Parents and caregivers should be alert for symptoms and keep a child home if he/she is running a fever or exhibiting any of the other symptoms of the flu. The CDC recommends that individuals with flu-like illness remain at home until at least 24 hours after they are free of fever (100° F [37.8 C] or greater), or signs of a fever without the use of fever-reducing medications. In most cases this would be 3-5 days. In more severe cases, it would be longer. This is recommended because increased temperature is associated with increased shedding of the virus. Many people with the flu continue to shed the virus for 24 hours after the fever is gone.
- **Control of symptoms:** Fever-reducing medications including acetaminophen or ibuprofen are recommended. **Aspirin must never be given to children or teenagers** to prevent the possibility of them developing Reye's Syndrome.

Source: [www.flu.gov/plan/shcool/k12techreport.html](http://www.flu.gov/plan/shcool/k12techreport.html)

Vaccines for the H1N1 flu are now in clinical trials and it is hoped they will be available by mid-October. Information will be available in the news media.