



BISHOP OF HAMILTON

January 10, 2022

Very Reverend Monsignors,
Reverend Fathers, Reverend Deacons,
Chancery, Cemetery, and Parish staff,

LIFT UP YOUR HEARTS!

The Omicron variant of COVID-19 has taken the country by storm! Many of us have either contracted the virus, or been with someone who subsequently tested positive, and are required to isolate – for five days if fully vaccinated, for ten days if unvaccinated. Last weekend several Parishes and parish offices were required to close because the Parish Priest or Associate tested positive or had been in contact with someone who had, and had to isolate.

I know this is disheartening for you, as it is for us all! We have been doing our best to follow the protocols which seem so demanding. So, when we must “shut down” the Parish for a few days, it can be upsetting. And we are all afraid! No one wants to contract the illness, but so many have. We are tired of wearing masks, and many simply refuse. Some choose not to be vaccinated, which confounds those who are only too ready to be vaccinated AND receive the booster shot. We find ourselves at odds with one another, brothers and sisters in faith.

As Priests, we are shepherds, called to care for the sheep. This can be challenging when some refuse to following the guidelines, putting others at risk. Parishioners are becoming hostile to one another – and to their Priests (and Bishops). There is no doubt that this roller coaster we are on is exhausting us – yet we continue to be called to serve. I appreciate the efforts each of you have and continue to make. “God always asks for more!”

Brothers and sisters, can we be kind to one another? Can we care for one another? Can we consider the well-being of others before our own? When we pray for one another, our tendency to feel anger and resentment toward the other dissipates. So, let us pray constantly for one another. When we gather for Mass, to give thanks for the gift of Jesus Christ who gave all for us, let us do our small part to keep the church safe for all. It is not too much to sanitize hands and wear masks. It is not too much to give space between families and individuals.

Thank you for staying the course! Thank you for your patience and constancy. Thank you for your generosity and goodness. May the Holy Spirit fill your hearts with love – God’s love – so that your love for one another will abound!

Sincerely in Christ and Mary Immaculate,

† Douglas Crosby, OMI

(Most Rev.) Douglas Crosby, OMI
Bishop of Hamilton.

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