

Hong Kong was one of the first places in the world to be infected by the Novel Coronavirus originating in China, but no one at our monastery has been infected. We have now been vigilant from February to August 2020.

We reflect on the reasons and the effects as follows:

1. We have given great attention to the announcements and directives of the Hong Kong government and our diocese, especially since we know that any pandemic preparedness measures announced by Hong Kong's Cardinal John Tong, has been done in consultation with medical professionals and is therefore practical and appropriate. On February 13th, the Diocese consequently announced that all parish churches would cancel Sunday and weekday Masses and would be broadcasting them online to prevent infection of the attending priests and laypeople. Our community gathered to discuss the topic and made the decision to close our chapel to the public, cancelling all reservations for the retreatants, so as to prevent any external infection from entering our community.
2. We are, of course, more diligent about cleaning everything in the Community area and Guest House area. We also wear masks when we leave for business, and avoid passing through high transmission areas in Hong Kong.
3. Our monastery is located in the countryside within the county park so that there is natural ventilation that is enhanced by the sea breezes.
4. In the midst of the pandemic this year, all travel plans have been canceled. The candidates who come to the monastery from outside Hong Kong (such as China and Taiwan) may have had exposure so monastic entry currently becomes impossible. Nor is there entry by our Father Immediate, nor outside speakers, nor by our yearly retreat director. All are cancelling their trips. At the same time, we are not able to travel to other areas, such as to our daughter house, Rosary, in China, a trip which will be postponed.
5. During the past few months, we have maintained our daily life as scheduled. We attend the liturgy and Mass as always. Our manual labor work continues as usual.
6. Because we have closed the Guest House, there has been a reduction in our income from the retreatants. We still receive donations and Mass Stipends to help support the community.
7. Some of the religious and local parish churches have shared material items with us, such as face masks, hand washing liquid, and so on. We are very grateful for their concern and help.

During this time of waiting, we hope our monasteries around the world will be protected by God's loving care and that the pandemic will end soon.