

## Covid Update February

### Thanksgiving

The roll out of the vaccine programme continues to go well. Locally we are now at the end of vaccinating the 70+ and extremely clinically vulnerable and starting on the 65+ age group. By the end of the month this will have a dramatic effect on the death rate amongst the ill and elderly. The results of the early trial work showed that, even though a small percentage of those vaccinated still contracted the virus, there were no deaths. The trials were with tens of thousands and not the many millions that have now received the vaccine so we may still see the occasional death; but the situation has been radically changed.

There is a "but" however.

The rate of infections is still high and, although the younger are at less risk, the dangers of serious illness, hospital admission and even death is still a real one for the remainder of the population. In a way this phase will appear more tragic. It is easier to cope with the death of a 100-year-old compared to that of a 60 year old or younger. So, pray for the widows, widowers and families affected.

### **Prayer Requests from medics/hospitals further afield**

My niece works as a nurse in a paediatric critical care ward and she has asked for our prayers for a current Covid case. The baby was born prematurely at 28 weeks and is in ITU, the mother is severely ill with Covid so is in an induced coma on a ventilator, her parents have both recently died of Covid, leaving the husband to cope with looking after their two other tiny children and cope with the tragedy of the situation. Pray that mum and baby will survive and thrive, and that dad and the other children will be protected.

I also have a nephew who has been recently appointed to an unusual role as a Chaplain to the staff of a hospital rather than to the patients. It was envisaged that he would be giving one-to-one support, especially for the nursing staff. Now, with the restrictions of social distancing and enormous time restraints, much is proving impossible. However he was asked to give a talk to some of the medical staff on "Resilience". It went so well that he has been booked to do the same with a group of consultants – daunting!

He has sent the following message

In essence our hospital is seeing numbers go in the right direction, but there are still several intense weeks ahead for the ITU staff and all those currently redeployed to them. Prayers would be for

- God's presence and protection throughout the hospital
  - Rest and peace for all the staff right now
  - Rest and peace, that all the staff can continue to restore themselves in the months to come
  - For unity and collaboration in the coming weeks; particularity that the staff can help each other in processing their experiences and turning to each other for support
- For God to supply all our needs; and that many encounters with His provision would take place.