



31 March 2020

Preamble

Arrupe Jesuit University (AJU) is monitoring the Coronavirus disease (COVID-19) situation closely and carefully. We take the health and well-being of all Arrupeans seriously, since these are at the core of our call to demonstrate *cura personalis*. In this regard, we need the following safety measures that are immediate and can help us to make informed decisions about how to survive this pandemic. This policy response comes at the end of consultations, reflections and deliberations on the communications and information available publicly from the Zimbabwe Catholic Bishops Conference (ZCBC), Ministry of Health and Childcare, Ministry of Higher and Tertiary Education, Science and Technology Development, directives from the Rector of the Jesuit community, two letters from the Jesuit Province of Zimbabwe-Mozambique, guidance by the Conference of Major Religious Superiors (CMRS), and a sensitization session given the University community by the World Health Organization (WHO).

The scope of this policy is **every member of the AJU community**, with necessary adjustments made by various groups and individuals only to enhance the spirit of the document. The nature of the policy is **binding** in the discretion of the Administration to sanction any breach.

As of today, Monday 30, 2020, the nation of Zimbabwe is in LOCKDOWN with a limited number of people allowed to move out of residence in the service of life and to ensure essential services. This updated policy is in compliance with this latest nationwide lockdown injunction.

Policy – Proactive Prevention and Containment

1. Information

1.1. According to multiple websites dealing with public health, human coronaviruses are common throughout the world and usually cause mild to moderate illness in people. The COVID-19 virus is new and scientists do not yet understand the complete nature of this virus. Up until March 11 when the coronavirus was declared a pandemic, the World Health Organization noted that there were about 126,000 cases worldwide. However, by March 29, the cases worldwide had surpassed 722,350. In other words, new cases are emerging exponentially, and **fatalities** are increasing.

Please follow the WHO situation reports here:

<https://www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019/situation-reports>

1.2. The new coronavirus is a global and public health concern and we are unable to predict when the pandemic will be over.

1.3. There are lots of unknowns about COVID-19, but we know the following to be among its symptoms: Fever (38 degrees Celsius), shortness of breath, dry cough, sore throat, and general fatigue.

1.4. Preparedness and response will require everyone to educate him/herself on the symptoms of COVID-19 in the individual. Go through the ministry of health website for guidance or visit the WHO website for correct information about symptoms.

1.5. Filter your sources of information about the virus. Avoid conspiracy theories and extreme news bubbles and diligently seek facts on what is happening today and what are the guidelines.

1.6. We are reminded that crises are only political until they are personal; hence, we are invited to avoid making the COVID-19 situation a mere political talking point.

1.7. **Ministry of Health Hotlines** on COVID-19: Mobile numbers: 0714734593 and 0774112531.

1.8. Take time to **read** the various posters on offer, from the World Health Organisation and the Ministry of Health.

2. Hygiene

- 2.1. Nothing beats washing of hands, i.e. frequent and proper handwashing, accompanied by cleanliness and general hygiene. Washing of hands is compulsory for anyone entering the premises of AJU at all times.
- 2.2. Either sanitizer or water/soap shall be placed in the following public places: entrances to the main chapel, multipurpose hall, kitchen, staff rooms, students lounge, library, lecture rooms, seminar rooms, Rutendo, library, computer labs, administration block, and the Rector's office. These sanitizers and water/soap will also be available at both gates.
- 2.3. The use of hand-sanitizer should always be a last resort; and use hand sanitizer that has at least 70% alcohol. Hand sanitization tools at the entrances of these common places are to remain where they are placed.
- 2.4. There will be posters showing the places to wash hands and also the proper way to wash hands.
- 2.5. For now, all residents and other Arrupeans are advised to cover mouth and nose with a disposable tissue when coughing or sneezing; use the nearest waste receptacle to dispose of the tissue after use; and then perform hand hygiene after having contact with respiratory secretions and contaminated objects/materials (e.g. hand washing with soap and water or sanitizer).
- 2.6. The University will carry out periodic disinfection procedures in classrooms and bathrooms and clinic and administrative block and other areas of the campus. Such procedures will include disinfection of floors of rooms, (toilets floors, kitchen) as well as surfaces that are frequently touched by such as doorknobs, handrails, etc.
- 2.7. ALL AJU vehicles will have hand sanitizers and users are required to disinfect the steering and inside surfaces regularly.
- 2.8. A temperature gun will be acquired as soon as possible. Masks are on hand for use when they are mandatory. The temperature gun will be used at the main gate to measure the temperatures of all those entering the premises, and therefore guide the decision on whether the person will be allowed into the campus. The mask is to be used when someone has the symptoms – like persistent cough, fever - even if he/she is not a confirmed case of COVID-19.

3. Human Interaction

- 3.1. An isolation facility and referral hospital have been identified. The Mtima Cottage will serve as the isolation facility for residents of the University (equipped and managed according to advice from WHO). Protocols to follow when one **feels** the symptoms:
 - 3.1.1. The individual must distance himself/herself from the rest of the household (into his or her room), and make sure that no one from the household gains access to the room.
 - 3.1.2. The individual is required to first make a phone call to the Assistant Minister for Health, Mr Luis Matope, SJ (mobile number 0733586430), or the School Nurse (Sr Faith (mobile number 0773404326) as first responders.

3.1.3. To aid these two, if necessary, Dr Edward Chagunda (mobile number 0772292034) will be contacted

3.1.4. In the event that hospital services are needed, the school nurse and the AJU health coordinator will make the required arrangements for some hospital services.

3.2. Isolation and quarantine:

3.2.1. When you visit a space where an infected person is identified, you need to consider **self-quarantine for fourteen days**, even if you have no symptoms or are only mildly ill.

3.2.2. Residents under quarantine should remain at their community residence, refrain from movement off the property to other residences or homes or public places; they should also refrain from receiving visitors.

3.2.3. **Any person in quarantine who develops febrile illness** (fever, raised temperature) **or respiratory symptoms at any point should be treated and managed as a suspect COVID-19 case.** The individual **MUST** immediately inform the Assistant Minister for health (as stipulated in 3.1.2. above).

3.2.4. At the discretion of the Assistant Minister of health and his team, the suspected infected person will be moved to the designated isolation facility and await instructions from the school nurse or identified medical personnel (as stipulated in 3.1.2 and 3.1.3 above).

3.2.5. ALL Arrupeans must desist from handshakes, hugs, pecks, and other close contact. ALL must observe physical distancing (i.e. a minimum distance of two metres and no physical contact whatsoever), more than just social distancing.

3.2.6. The Zimbabwe Centre for Disease Control recommends that, on self-quarantine/isolation, the individual **MUST** stay away completely from shared spaces such as kitchens and common room. A separate bathroom for the person in quarantine is mandatory. The person **MUST** wear a face mask. He/she must **NOT** share household utensils and items.

3.3. ALL common spaces must be kept **well-ventilated** and receiving as much sunlight as possible.

3.4. Group sporting activities that involve bodily contact are suspended, even as exercise is strongly encouraged.

3.5. ALL Masses on campus are cancelled until further notice.

3.6. All Jesuits in formation are to limit their attendance of ALL Masses to their respective small communities. **NO** visitors.

3.7. Seats are to be well-spaced to comply with physical distancing.

3.8. Holy Communion at Mass is restricted to the Body alone.

3.9. Those described as most at risk (either because of having underlying health conditions, or because of age) should avoid putting themselves at risk of contracting COVID-19. In like manner, those sharing living spaces with them should not behave in a way that puts these at risk.

3.10. As stipulated by ZCBC, there should be **NO** pastoral visits to those in self-quarantine or in isolation until the period of isolation ends. However, care and support provided by phone or the stipulated distance are encouraged. If anointing is to take place, pastoral agents are advised to use a cotton bud rather than using the hands to apply the oils. An

extension of hands, rather than laying on of hands is mandated. NO visits to persons in care homes or hospitals is allowed.

3.11. Funerals are to be left to the close family members and associates

3.12. Priests resident in AJU communities need **explicit permission** from the Rector before they can assist at Masses other than the Masses in their respective communities.

3.13. Transparency about destinations is encouraged in order to account for possible exposure to the virus.

3.14. ALL non-essential local and international travels and visits are to be postponed.

4. Immediate Specific Measures

4.1. AJU campus has remained closed since March 24, 2020. By closure, we mean there will be no in-person lectures here at AJU. However, learning and instruction will continue **online** (starting March 30). ALL STUDENTS are required to stay away from the campus.

4.2. AJU lecturers have been working with the IT department to prepare, record, and upload online classes and materials. Both teachers and students are encouraged to FULLY utilize these online interactions in order to boost learning.

4.3. After the initiation into uploading online packages for teaching, teaching-staff will report to work as and when they will receive instructions from the PVC-Academics. Teachers are instructed to copy the PVC Academics on their uploads on key scholarly materials for the record.

4.4. ALL other meetings that ensure the running of the University are to be online. Requests to set up online groups for meetings are to be sent by email to the PVC-Academics, with complete **.aju email addresses** and times for meetings. An invitation can then be relayed to all persons concerned. This latter is provided by our relationship with Google, and those who already know how to use it (staff or students) are encouraged to make full use of the facility.

4.5. Specific instructions will be communicated by their line-managers in compliance with the government ruling on lockdown procedures, to all members of non-teaching staff in case their presence on campus is deemed necessary.

4.6. **Students are requested to email to deanofstudents@aju.ac.zw two (WhatsApp) numbers:** i.e. a personal number and the number of next of kin/guardian (include the name). This is to enable the University to check on your wellbeing and to send any new information about AJU response to the pandemic.

4.7. ALL Arrupeans must constantly **check their emails** for official communication, since these actions are subject to periodic review, depending on how the situation evolves.

4.8. Students are strongly advised to create their own **dedicated virtual workspaces**; teachers are expected to clearly communicate when their online lectures will be taught to students.

4.9. Students and Staff must remain open to alternative **modes of examination** depending on how the situation will evolve, including but not limited to: written scripts, submitted long papers, etc. A further communication will be issued soon.

4.10. The graduation is a matter of ongoing reflection and consultation and it may be modified or postponed.

4.11. All apostolates are hereby suspended until further notice. In terms of giving retreats - especially the ongoing retreat in daily life (one to one) -- there is need to exercise prudence and discretion compliant with guidelines on social-distancing. Non-physical contact (e.g.

by WhatsApp, in as far as this is admissible in terms of confidentiality and data protection) is preferable.

Postscript:

A summary of the conditions set by the current lockdown in Zimbabwe are:

- Starting Monday March 30, 2020 – total lockdown for 21 days.
- Exceptions: Critical movement of goods, key utilities i.e. power, water
- Security deployment to complement civilian efforts.
- Funerals exempted, but numbers should be less than 50.
- Refuelling motorists ordered not to leave vehicles.
- Food stalls allowed to operate, non-food stalls closed.
- Public transport stopped except for ZUPCO and PSC buses.
- Toll-free hotline number is 2019.
- Testing and diagnostics: centralised at Provincial level.
- Social media alarmist to be punished.
- Business encouraged to support employees.

Source: *The Herald*, March 28, 2020

This may be the first time in decades that our world has experienced a true *memento mori* -- a reminder of life's transience and fragility. Hence, we are urged to take every sensible precaution in defense of human life, while continuing to serve God and neighbor. This is not the time to continue to live as if youth, health, and freedom are the default settings of life. We should not forget that, when the plague came to Wittenberg in 1527, Martin Luther remarked: "If the people in a city... are so foolish as not to take precautions but aggravate the contagion, then the devil has a heyday and many will die." Each of us individually and all of us collectively must observe these precautions outlined above, change our behaviour to comply, and educate those we live with, as well as pray that this crisis may pass.

♦This policy has been researched, sourced, compiled and drafted by the COVID-19 ad hoc Committee. We are grateful to Dr Stephen Nzyoki, SJ, Fr Chuks Mueme, SJ, and a team of students: Norbert Rwodzi, SJ, Victor Mureithi, SJ, Karen Chiedza, and Eric Chikanya, SJ. We are grateful for their tireless work, amid all the other pressures of their various responsibilities.