

Coronavirus and the Church: 'Submission' or 'lack of faith'? (part 2)

Today, I conclude the reflection by the Bishop of Vannes, France

The temptation of 'fideism'

Charity and prudence must guide our actions and decisions during the coronavirus pandemic.

One should not claim to have "a right" to receive the Blessed Sacrament to the detriment of charity towards our neighbour.

"We cannot ask God to perform a one-off miracle to make up for our lack of prudence," Bishop Centène said.

He pointed out that the consecrated host "remains subject to the laws of nature" and can be contaminated with the virus. In Australia, the first set of recommendations by our bishops aimed at reducing this risk by recommending that communion be taken in the hand.

Similarly, crowded places increase the rapidity with which the virus spreads, regardless of the place being a church. This risk is addressed by the most recent recommendations from the bishops of Victoria.

Lack of prudence, the French bishop said, amounts to "tempting God."

As an example he cited the Gospel passage from the First Sunday of Lent, which recounts the temptations Jesus faced in the desert.

The devil tells Jesus to throw himself down from the top of the temple and that God will send his angels "lest you dash your foot against a stone". Jesus replies: "You shall not put the Lord your God to the test."

"Praying for health without taking any precautions to prevent the spread of a disease is not faith, it is fideism," the bishop said.