SARS in Singapore

Singapore. The SARS virus (Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome) has reached Singapore. This affects our new apostolic congregation as well. The rector of our Singapore congregation, Joseph Sim, describes the situation:

The Health Ministry has taken preventive measures to contain the spreading of SARS in our Island Republic of Singapore.

A pastor from another denomination visited an SARS infected young member of his congregation who returned from a visit to Hong Kong. She infected her father and her mother, and died within three days of contracting the deadly virus. The girl's father and mother have since died, too. The situation prompted some Churches to close for assemblies on Sundays and other gatherings. Those that are open require congregation members to wear surgical masks. There is no shaking of hands any more.

Schools and universities are closed, the children stay at home. Business organizations have allowed workers to take leave. Also, public places are temporarily closed.

Our New Apostolic Church in Singapore has taken preventive measures for the well being of our members. Our Church is placed in a rather compact sort of building with very little natural air ventilation. We have therefore decided to temporarily close for services. Meanwhile we have taken proper preventive action by having our Church premises fumigated and cleaned up. All air-conditioning units are completely serviced.

Health authorities are keeping watch on the situation and giving directives. At the airport, 100 medical workers are on hand to check on arrival passengers. Everyone get temperature taken and watch for questionable signs of SARS. Those that are sick will be taken away to hospitals immediately. Ambulances are on stand by at the airport. All workers wear preventive clothes.

I am only giving a brief of the situation in Singapore. We pray!

Joseph Sim

9 April 2003