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## **COVID-19 Coronavirus: Mgr. Pezzi (Moscow), “God shows us that we need one another”. Guidelines for the diocese**

“The coronavirus is not a curse or a punishment from God. However, in these painful circumstances, God shows us that far from being omnipotent, we are fragile and vulnerable creatures. Despite all its achievements, science cannot solve the problems of suffering, death and evil. God shows us that we need one another, that we must take care of our brothers and sisters, that we must learn to live and accept God in our lives”. The Archbishop of Moscow, Mgr. Paolo Pezzi, wrote this in his message to the faithful, while the Russian authorities confirmed 63 infections throughout the Russian Federation today and announced the closure of borders with Belarus as well as the creation of a “special working group” to fight the outbreak. Life in the Federation goes on as usual for now, but Mgr. Pezzi recommends priests take safety measures such as keeping a distance, hygiene, avoiding kissing icons, and distributing Holy Communion “without touching the lips with the fingers. If necessary, and if this does not cause too much discomfort among the faithful, the latter can receive Holy Communion in their hands”. “I think that God allows a time of epidemic as a propitious time for us to acknowledge our confusion, our fear of the unknown, our need for habits to learn to trust in Him”, the Vicar General Fr. Sergej Timashov wrote on the website of the Archdiocese, so that we “see His goodness in the mist of uncertainty surrounding us”.

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