

---

## **Poland: Bishops' Conference, respect for rules, but "pain" for Masses without community. Message for John Paul II's centenary**

"In this unusual situation, the most important thing is the Christian commitment to each person, their life and their spiritual and physical well-being", the Polish bishops wrote last Saturday night, 2 May, as they met for the meeting of the Permanent Episcopal Council in Jasna Gora. The bishops expressed their gratitude to all those who bring relief to those who suffer. They also stressed the need to respect the restrictions imposed by the health authorities on religious celebrations, although "it is difficult and painful for many of us", and urged the clergy to give the faithful a chance to receive the Sacraments in complete safety. The final statement issued at the end of the Council cites Pope Francis' words on the inadequacy of a mere "virtual reality" when it comes to religious practices. The statement, marking the 100th anniversary of John Paul II's birth on 18 May, invites the Polish clergy to celebrate thanksgiving Masses for the life and pontificate of the Polish Pope on 17 and 18 May.

Gianni Borsa