

# Pope tests negative for coronavirus, Italy report says

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## Key Points

Vatican spokesman Matteo Bruni said he had no immediate comment on the report.

The 83-year-old Roman Catholic leader, who had part of one lung removed because of an illness decades ago, also canceled most audiences last week.



Pope Francis shows a bruise around his left eye and eyebrow caused by an accidental hit against the popemobile's window glass while visiting the old sector of Cartagena, Colombia, on September 10, 2017.

Pope Francis, who canceled a Lent retreat for the first time in his papacy because he is suffering from a cold, has tested negative for coronavirus, the Italian newspaper Il Messaggero reported on Tuesday.

Vatican spokesman Matteo Bruni said he had no immediate comment on the report. The 83-year-old Roman Catholic leader, who had part of one lung removed because of an illness decades ago, also canceled most audiences last week.

Francis was to have taken part in the week-long retreat with senior Vatican officials that began on Sunday night at a Church residence south of Rome.

But in a surprise announcement hours earlier, he said he would be following it from his residence in a Vatican guest house.

He has been taken ill at a time when Italy is battling a surging outbreak of the potentially deadly coronavirus.

The death toll in Italy jumped to 52 on Monday from 34 the day before and the total number of confirmed cases in Europe's worst affected country climbed past the 2,000 mark.