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PRIEST WHO SERVED COVID PATIENTS NAMED HERO OF THE YEAR IN PENZA



According to the readers of the Penza Pravda newspaper, Fr. Viktor Storozhev is among the most memorable people of 2021.

Fr. Viktor, who was featured in the newspaper last year, was the first Penza priest to start serving COVID patients in the “red zone.”

The paper announced the results of its Heroes of the Year contest, based on more than 5,000 readers’ votes, on December 29. Fr. Viktor was later awarded a certificate and a gift card to a local supermarket at the Pezna Pravda office.

The Penza Diocese repeatedly offered to send priests to various hospitals to minister to patients, but the hospitals refused. Finally, on December 4, 2020, Fr. Viktor was allowed to begin visiting patients at one local hospital. He simply trusted God, not thinking about whether or not he’d get infected, Fr. Viktor told the Penza Pravda.

Four days after his first visit, he did fall ill, though he recovered quickly.

The paper tells the story of how Fr. Viktor visited one 80-year-old woman in the ICU. After giving her Confession, Communion, and Unction, she whispered to him:

“It’s so good that you came. I’m not so scared now…”

In October, a priest was named Citizen of the Year of Maple Heights, Ohio.

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