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**STATEMENT OF ARCHBISHOP NELSON J. PÉREZ
REGARDING THE CORONAVIRUS (COVID-19)**

Over the last several weeks, the potential spread of the Coronavirus (COVID-19) has dramatically impacted our lives and our communities. As the number of cases grow exponentially each day, government and health officials are diligently working to contain the virus.

During this pandemic, we are reminded that life is truly precious and that we all are one family under God. As Christians, we should respond to this pandemic with great faith and prudence.

The Centers for Disease Control (CDC) have developed guidelines to help slow the spread the coronavirus. We should incorporate their strategies into our daily lives in an effort to protect ourselves as well as others, especially those most vulnerable, including the elderly and individuals with compromised immune systems.

God is always by our side, he never abandons us. I invite you to join me in prayerful solidarity during this uncertain time. I remind you to keep your eyes fixed on the outstretched arms of Christ the crucified and Christ the merciful and to encounter others with charity and understanding.

Let us pray for the sick, suffering, and their caregivers as well as government and health officials. With God's grace and blessing, we will navigate the difficult waters of this challenge as a united human family, for after all is said and done, we are people of Hope!

+Nelson J. Pérez
Archbishop of Philadelphia