News

Passengers wearing protective masks are pictured in early June outside Rome's Termini train station. A Caritas shelter located at train station has suspended activities after more than half of its residents tested positive for COVID-19. (CNS/Reuters/Guglielmo Mangiapane)

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A Caritas shelter located in Rome's Termini train station suspended activities after nearly half of its residents tested positive for COVID-19.

In a statement released Oct. 20 via its Twitter account, Caritas Roma said that a second round of testing at the Don Luigi Di Liegro shelter revealed that 35 of the facility's 72 residents were infected and asymptomatic.

The shelter temporarily closed Oct. 8 after 23 residents and two volunteers tested positive. One was transferred to a hospital while four were sent to other facilities in isolation.

The remaining residents who tested positive remained in isolation at the shelter.

However, Caritas Rome said it was greatly concerned after the second round of testing Oct. 18 came back with a greater number of infections.

"The Lazio region has begun transferring positive residents today to the appropriate facilities to receive treatment," Caritas said.

The Don Luigi Di Liegro shelter has remained a fixture in one of Rome's busiest transit hubs since 1987. Pope Francis visited the Caritas shelter in 2015 where he opened a Holy Door for the homeless at the start of the Jubilee Year of Mercy.

Authorities in Italy have been on high alert due to a spike in infections. Italian Prime Minister Giuseppe Conte announced a series of new restrictions Oct. 18 to curb the rise in cases and prevent a second lockdown in the country.

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