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Greek Church leaders request exemption to coronavirus curfew, to hold liturgies behind closed doors



The Greek Church leadership requested an exemption from coronavirus curfew measures in a letter to Education & Religion Ministry officials on Thursday, to carry on liturgies on a normal schedule, behind closed doors.

Before the curfew, the government had allowed only emergency services such as funerals, with a restricted number of attendees, and church visits for individual prayers only, with distances kept among the faithful.

In a letter to Minister Niki Kerameus, Archbishop Hieronymos of Athens and All Greece argued that the exception “will facilitate to the utmost in the mission of the Church, which is obliged to pray and supplicate over the health of its flock, but will also contribute decisively to allowing the lay members of the Church to keep their composure.” He also pointed out that the measures have affected services within hospitals and monasteries, the latter of which live as isolated communities anyway. As he also pointed out, liturgies have been live-streamed.

In a related letter, the Holy Synod requested of the ministry's secretary general Giorgos Kaladjis that the six reasons to break curfew include 'individual prayer,' and those wishing to visit cemeteries and family members' graves. Current curfew exemption reasons do not include individual prayer at churches.

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— Source: [amna.gr](https://www.amna.gr)