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Archbishop Ieronymos to Greek PM: Church hierarchs directed by conscience, amid pandemic



A letter sent by the Archbishop of Athens and All Greece, His Beatitude Ieronymos, to Greek Prime Minister Kyriakos Mitsotakis, stresses that hierarchs were directed by conscience, a phrase related to the Church of Greece's decisions, positions and actions amid the ongoing coronavirus pandemic, especially in regards to the state's restrictions on the presence of worshipers in of places of worship.

Additionally, the Primate of the Church of Greece cites, in detail, the problems, protests and concerns the Church fielded from the clergy and laity.

Ieronymos also referred to the sacrament of the Holy Communion, saying the Holy Synod of the Church of Greece has followed a very responsible stance, from the beginning of the public health crisis – reminding that the Church, via a series of encyclicals, called on the clergy and reverential flock to follow public health guidelines and to remain at home.

The Archbishop cited increased and repeated protects by its clerics and many of the faithful against the restrictions.

The statement added: “…besides the fact that we, the Church hierarchs, on many occasions became the recipients of complaints and insults, we were also directed by our conscience; we bore an unbearable Cross, which only the conviction of our faith in the triumph of our Crucified and Resurrected Lord Jesus Christ, over every evil, helped us endure and persevere.”

As previously reported, the Mitsotakis government, following recommendations and guidelines by the committee of experts, will lift a prohibition on worshipers entering places of worship, as of Monday. This means that personal worship will be restored.

Church-going by the faithful will resume on Sunday, May 17, with social distancing protocols and other public health precautions in place, something that the Church of Greece has not only accepted, but, in fact, has committed to strictly apply.

In light of the latest decisions, caretakers of cathedrals and chapels around the east Mediterranean country have begun stepped up works to disinfect and clean church interiors.



In a related development, speaking during a daily briefing on Thursday, Deputy Civil Defense Minister Nikos Hardalias stressed, in answer to a

press question, that he was a deeply religious person.

Hardalias, who has appeared on a nationally televised daily briefing for the past month, referred to support by the Greek Orthodox Church towards the state’s efforts to combat the Covid-19 virus.