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Two weeks remain before opening of churches in Greece for services with worshipers



Less than two weeks remain before churches reopen in Greece for holy services with the presence of worshippers, and specifically on Sunday, May 17. Members of the Holy Synod of the Autocephalous Orthodox Church of Greece are expected to convene next Tuesday and detail all precautions and measures that will be in place for the holding of services and the Divine Liturgy.

In terms of continuing speculation and often blasphemous references in some media to the holding of the Holy Communion, the permanent Holy Synod will reportedly reiterate that this issue is non-negotiable – in other words, the Church and its clerics will offer the sacrament.

At the same time, several high-ranking government officials have emphasized that the state will not interfere in matters of faith, only on issues dealing with social distancing and public health precautions.

In his intervention, the Metropolitan of Messinia, His Eminence Chrysostomos, decried what he called a “slandering of the sacrament of the Holy Eucharist” by

some quarters.

In a related development, 37 physicians living and working in Greece and abroad addressed a letter to the Greek prime minister and members of the Holy Synod of the Church of Greece, requesting, among others, a reopening of places of worship.

Regarding the issue of the Holy Communion, the letter by the physicians reads: “…as far as the participation of the faithful in the sacrament of the Holy Eucharist, this is a strictly personal matter, one depending exclusively on faith and the volition of the congregant. After all, in the millennia-old history of the Orthodox Church never has there been a chronicled instance of transmission of an infectious disease via the Holy Communion.”