

Concern amongst the faithful over Covid-19 restrictions on Church-going during holy days of Christmas



The Greek government, as widely expected, on Thursday announced a one-week extension of a three-week partial lockdown in the country. The restrictive measures, aimed to reduce exposure to the Covid-19 virus, were due to expire on Nov. 30. Nevertheless, they were extended to Dec. 7, given that the “second wave” of the pandemic has exponentially increased confirmed single-day instances, related fatalities and intubated patients in the country, compared with the spring.

The latest announcement has caused concern within the Church's ranks and among the faithful, as fears were expressed over a repeat of the situation last Easter, when cathedrals and chapels were closed to worshippers.

According to the latest reports in the Greek capital, no ban on worshippers will be imposed for the holy days of Christmas, although strict social distancing and public health protocols, such as the mandatory wearing of masks, will be in place.

In a meeting earlier this month between the Archbishop of Athens and All Greece, His Beatitude Ieronymos, and Greek Prime Minister Kyriakos Mitsotakis, the latter declared that it was up to us, each individual personally, to adhere to the measures and celebrate Christmas with churches open.