

## **Church of Cyprus insists sharing communion spoon will not spread Covid**



The Church of Cyprus insisted on Tuesday that receiving holy communion using the same spoon would not spread the coronavirus, as it advised people to apply protective measures and to get vaccinated against the virus.

The Church Holy Synod convened on Tuesday to discuss the coronavirus and hear the views of experts who had been invited to brief the island's top clergy about all aspects of the pandemic and respond to their questions.

The meeting was not attended by Paphos Bishop Georgios who came into contact with a confirmed coronavirus case. He has since tested negative twice but was self-isolating as a precaution.

In a statement after the meeting, the Synod said it was everyone's duty to apply what the state and the health services prescribed for the public's protection.

"We voluntarily restrict our freedom and rights, even when it comes to church, to

protect ourselves and our fellow humans and be able to exit restrictions as soon as possible,” the statement said.

However, the Church insisted that dispensing holy communion with the use of the same spoon for all and using the same cloth to wipe their mouths, did not transmit any diseases.

“This is proven by the long life and practice of the Church. It will continue to be dispensed in the traditional way ... in line with the health authorities’ provisions regarding distance and personal protection.”

The Holy Synod went on to advise people to vaccinate themselves against the virus “provided the particular one would be recommended by the state’s health services”.

The Synod said it did not ignore the reservations expressed by some people concerning the composition and action of certain vaccines being prepared by large pharmaceutical companies, but it did not embrace the conspiracy theories surrounding the matter.

“It is not possible to ascribe any sort of interests to the state’s health services apart from concern for people’s health,” the Synod said.

No one will be forced to get the vaccine but those who decide to do so should not burden their consciousness with “ungrounded and unscientific falsehoods.”

“Everyone’s aim must be not to mourn other victims and to tackle the pandemic effectively as soon as possible.”