

Greek govt eases restrictions on Church-going between Christmas Day and the Epiphany on Jan. 6



Churches around Greece will reopen for the Holy 12-Week period between Christmas Day and the Epiphany, on Jan. 6, but with a specific daily schedule and with all public health precautions and restrictions in place to prevent exposure to the Covid-19 virus.

This positive development follows the publication of a joint ministerial decision on Tuesday regulating the presence of worshipers and the faithful in all places of worship in the overwhelming Christian Orthodox nation.

The decision, which followed a teleconference on Monday between the Archbishop of Athens and All Greece, His Beatitude Ieronymos, and Greek Prime Minister Kyriakos Mitsotakis, came as members of the Holy Synod of the Church of Greece were convening.

Specifically, individual prayer and veneration will be allowed in churches, while the

Great Divine Liturgies of Christmas Day, New Year's Day and the Epiphany will be conducted with the presence of worshipers.

A specific ratio, nevertheless, has been imposed on the number of worshipers that can be present, based on the size of the cathedral, while the maximum number of faithful has been set at 50, for Metropolitan cathedrals.

Moreover, the annual sanctification of the waters service on the day of the Epiphany, called the Theophany of Our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ by the Orthodox Church, will only be held inside churches and chapels.

Still in the country, Greek Premier Mitsotakis on Tuesday, speaking from Parliament, again cited the significant role that the Church is called upon to play in the coming mass vaccination campaign against the Covid-19 virus.