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## **Coronavirus Covid-19: Lithuania, the lockdown gets looser. Attending Mass, 10 square metres per devotee**

The virus is circulating in the Baltic countries too: according to Lithuanian government's sources, the cases recorded in Lithuania so far are 1,449 and the number of deaths is 41. 1,647 people have been infected and 50 died in Estonia, while in Latvia the number of infections is 181 and the number of dead is 13. In Lithuania, the quarantine started on 16<sup>th</sup> March and will last until 11<sup>th</sup> May, but some closures and bans will be lifted as from today, including the ban on public celebrations, and the Bishops' Conference updated its rules accordingly. People can attend Mass, but will have to wear face masks – with the only exception of the celebrant – with the devotees keeping at a safe distance from each other that will provide a space of 10 square metres each. "If people cannot all get into the church, when outside they will have to stay 2 metres from each other" and will not get into the church to receive Holy Communion, which will "first be handed out inside the church, then to the devotees outside". Coffins cannot be taken into the church, but funerals can be celebrated in the cemeteries with a restricted number of people. "We particularly urge believers and priests to pray to curb the virus faster and to ask good health for the sick and strength for those who take care of them", the bishops write on. The daily moment of prayer at 08.00 pm is still going on online, as well: praying is "an important contribution to the fight against the pandemic".

Valentina Bombelli