
COVID-19 Coronavirus: Germany, towards controlled resumption of liturgies. Catholic and Protestant Churches submit proposals to Government

The so-called “Corona Cabinet” of the Federal Government has received 16 memoranda and projects for the “resumption” of worship from different religious denominations in Germany. Recommendations for public liturgies and gatherings will be discussed from today until 29 April, with a final decision due by the end of the week. According to a spokesperson for the Federal Ministry of the Interior, the proposals put forward are “a sound basis” for the development of a framework plan. There are reports that the framework plan of 29 April will be an item on the agenda of the Conference of the Prime Ministers of the Länder. The federal and state governments will be meeting again the following day. German Chancellor Angela Merkel will report on the outcome of the conference and a possible ease of restrictions. It will then be up to individual Länder to decide if and how worship can take place. Two weeks ago, the Propsteikirche in Leipzig has introduced liturgies based on a quota system and prior booking, with strict controls and distancing between the faithful. On Friday, the Catholic and Protestant Churches submitted similar concrete proposals, stressing that they will continue to be fully committed to protecting the health of all their faithful. Each church, depending on its size, will need to limit the number of participants that are allowed in, so as to comply with social distancing requirements. Family members living together may sit together. The obligation to use protective equipment to cover one’s nose, mouth and hands is upheld, as well as the prohibition of ritual contacts (giving the sign of peace).

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