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## **Austria: Catholic Church suspends celebrations with the faithful. Mgr. Lackner, “now charity means acting responsibly”**

The Catholic Church suspends all liturgical celebrations with the faithful for a limited period of time from today until 6 December. The Austrian Bishops' Conference (ÖBK) took the decision following the introduction of new restrictive measures for the celebration of religious services. “With the new rules, the Catholic Church continues to support all government measures to overcome the COVID-19 pandemic”, the Archbishop of Salzburg and President of the ÖBK, Mgr. Franz Lackner, told Kathpress. “Since our country is in an extreme situation and an extensive lockdown will come into force on Tuesday, the Church will respect it and suspend all public services from 17 November to 6 December. Christian charity now means acting responsibly and protecting one another”. According to Mgr. Lackner, “the temporary restrictions are necessary so that we can soon celebrate the liturgies together again. Even and especially during the lockdown, religious life goes on, the Archbishop said: “The churches remain open for personal prayer” and Masses are “broadcast on the Internet. We should now live our faith as a domestic church. In this way, we can be close to one another in our hearts and open our hearts to those who need help”.

Massimo Lavena