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## **Denmark: new Covid-19 restrictions. Specific rules also for Masses during the Christmas season**

Denmark is imposing new restrictions amid a surge in Covid-19 cases, including the closure of theatres and cinemas. And Merck's anti-Covid treatment Molnupiravir is given the green light for at-risk patients with symptoms. It is the first European country to introduce it. The Catholic Church, too, has adapted to the restrictions. Bishop Czeslaw Kozon of Copenhagen outlined in a statement the new guidelines for Masses: they entered into force yesterday and shall apply until 16 January. They include social distancing and mandatory masks for all those attending mass aged 12 and over (which can be removed when seated) except for the celebrant and those performing some functions during the Liturgy. If more than 100 people are expected to take part in the celebration, the Green Pass is mandatory. Special attention must be paid to the Christmas Vigil, with the introduction of specific entry and exit rules to "avoid the gathering of large crowds outside the Church". It is recommended to "receive Communion in the hand", but if some people want to receive it on the tongue, there must be "a special line or they should be the last to receive it". In any case, if someone's hand or mouth is touched in the act of giving communion, hands must be sanitised before continuing. The Sign of Peace must be "exchanged without physical contact and offerings should be collected through MobilePay or with receptacles at the exit". Further measures may be introduced, but "restrictions are not as strict as last year, and we are glad that there is no time limit for the celebrations", the Bishop wrote.

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