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## **Coronavirus Covid-19: Great Britain, Denmark and the Netherlands, fewer restrictions on attending liturgies**

Some European governments are loosening their Covid-19 restrictions, so the Churches too are updating their measures for attending celebrations and pastoral events. The Danish government has announced that, regardless of the number of infections, the high rate of vaccinated people and the low proportion of occupied beds in intensive care units have made it possible to get rid of green passes and face masks as from tomorrow, 1<sup>st</sup> February. This will also apply to the diocese of Copenhagen, that disclosed it in a notice to the congregation, while it works out more specific rules for the sign of peace, the collection of money, the congregations' communion with the bread and wine. A much less restrictive system will apply to the British Churches as from this weekend. The general secretary of the Bishops' Conference, father Christopher Thomas, has written a long notice about this. "Prudence" should be balanced with "the need to move on safely towards a normal lifestyle". The obligation to wear a face mask will keep applying in Wales only; as to the rest, the celebrations will be back to almost normal, even in the sign of peace, the water in the stoups, the use of the hymnal. Air ventilation, hand sanitising before handing out the communion, doing everything respectfully of other people, are the key rules. More freedom for the devotees in the Netherlands too, the Bishops' Conference has written, so they can meet for parish events in the evenings again. The rule of the one and a half metre distancing to establish the potential capacity of a Church will still apply.

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