



## **Statement of hierarchs of the Orthodox Church of Cyprus on the Archbishop Chrysostomos' liturgical mention of head of the so-called Orthodox Church of Ukraine Epifaniy Dumenko**

*On October 24, 2020, Metropolitan Athanasius of Limassol, Metropolitan Nikephoros of Kykkos and Bishop Nicholas of Amathounta made a joint statement on the recognition of the so-called Orthodox Church of Ukraine by Archbishop Chrysostomos II of Cyprus, calling him as Primate of the Orthodox Church of Cyprus to cancel immediately the anti-canonical decision to include the name of the 'PCU' head Epifaniy Dumenko in the diptych of the Primates of the Local Orthodox Churches. Below is the full text of the statement.*

With great concern and profound sorrow we have learnt that today, Sunday, October 24, during the Divine Liturgy at the Monastery of Our Lady of Golden Pomegranate at which the episcopal consecration of the Very Rev. Bishop Pankratios of Arsinoe was celebrated, His Beatitude Archbishop Chrysostomos of Cyprus mentioned Epifaniy as 'Primate of the Ukrainian Church'.

1. This action of the Archbishop is a gross violation of the conciliar, collegial and democratic order of our Orthodox Church and of the way in which the Orthodox Church functions on the basis of this system.
2. His Beatitude had posed this issue at the recent meeting of the Holy Synod (September 9, 2020) and it was agreed then to consider it at another meeting in order to listen to the opinions and stands of all the members of the Holy Synod and to adopt a conciliar decision on this matter.
3. The recent promotion of Epifaniy by the Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew of Constantinople as 'Primate of the Ukrainian Church' has shaken the unity of the Orthodox Church and to this day, for reasons outside the scope of this document, he is recognized only by the Church of Greece and the Patriarchate of Alexandria. The rest of the Local Orthodox Churches have taken a negative position on this issue. (It is noteworthy that during the 'consecration' [apparently, this purports to be 'enthronement'] of the above-mentioned Epifaniy, none of the representatives of Local Orthodox Church were present, however it may be understood).
4. He who was proclaimed as 'Primate' of the Church of Ukraine by Patriarch Bartholomew has no canonical ordination whatsoever because he comes from schismatic groups of the Ukrainian Church. If His All-Holiness Ecumenical Patriarch had really wished to observe the canonical order in granting autocephaly to the Church of Ukraine, he should have turned to canonical Metropolitan Onufry of Kiev and, in addition, should have had the consent of the Moscow Patriarchate on this matter which concerns it, just as the consent of the Primates of the Local Orthodox Churches.
5. The action of the Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew to grant 'autocephaly' to the schismatic structures of the Ukrainian Church is an arbitrary, uncanonical and anti-church action since the Ukrainian Orthodox Church is under the jurisdiction of the Moscow Patriarchate. As we have already stated above, it is an intervention in the jurisdiction of this Patriarchate. Because of this

fact, the Russian Church in a counter action has justifiably suspended church communion with the Ecumenical Patriarchate as well as with the Churches of Greece and Alexandria.

6. According to the holy canons and practice of our Church, the granting of autocephaly is thinkable and possible only subject to a preliminary approval by the Primates of the Local Orthodox Churches. However, in this case, the Ecumenical Patriarch acted in this matter unilaterally and arbitrarily, contrary to what the holy canons and church Tradition say and in conflict with his own previous statements. Regrettably, this example has also been followed by the Primate of the Church of Cyprus ignoring his Holy Synod and disregarding it.
7. The decision of the Archbishop of Cyprus to mention Epifaniy as 'Primate of the Ukrainian Church' has made more complicated the already tense situation among Orthodox Church, augmenting the threat of schism facing the Universal Orthodoxy and recklessly bringing this atmosphere into the Church of Cyprus too.
8. We call upon His Beatitude to cancel immediately his anti-canonical and invalid action and at the same time we ask all the fellow-bishops of the Church of Cyprus to demand together the convocation of an extraordinary session of our Holy Synod in order to consider this matter and to make an appropriate decision.
9. Finally, we should underscore the ill-time nature of this decision of our Primate considering the crucial time in which we live with regard to our national problem as well as the threatening action undertaken by Turkey in her insatiable expansion threatening to diminish our people.

We state all the above confident in our rightfulness, aware of our hierarchal responsibility and the sacred duty to safeguard the canonical order of the Church in order to avoid the cardinal sin of schism since, according to St. John Chrysostom, 'the sin of schism cannot be washed away even by the blood of a martyr'.

Nicosia, 24 October 2020

+ Metropolitan Athanasios of Limassol

+ Metropolitan Nikephoros of Kukkos

+ Metropolitan Isaiah of Tamassos

+ Bishop Nicholas of Amathountha