Session of Holy Synod of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church takes place



On 6 December 2019, a session of the Holy Synod of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church (UOC) chaired by His Beatitude Metropolitan Onufry of Kiev and All Ukraine took place at the Kiev Laura of the Caves.

Official website of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church reports that the Synod expressed sorrow for the anti-canonical actions of the Primates of the Churches of Greece and Alexandria which entered into Eucharistic communion with the persons who were never ordained bishops, priests or deacons. The Synod noted that communion with representatives of the so called Orthodox Church of Ukraine (OCU) does not solve the problem of church schism in Ukraine, but is bringing about schism in the world Orthodoxy.

Members of the Synod thanked bishops, clerics and laypersons of the Churches of Greece and Alexandria who have not supported anti-canonical actions and did not enter into communion with schismatics, and stated with regret that the Ukrainian Orthodox Church can no longer have eucharistic communion with the Primates of the Churches of Greece and Alexandria and with the hierarchs of these Churches who will maintain Eucharistic communion with OCU representatives.

The Synod issued a statement that will be read out in all churches of the UOC on Sunday.

The Synod expressed respectful support of peace initiatives of Ukrainian President Volodimir Zelensky pertaining to the settlement of the conflict in the east of Ukraine offered on December 4, 2019, at the meeting with representatives of the All-Ukrainian Council of Churches and Religious Organizations, including His Beatitude Metropolitan Onufry of Kiev and All Ukraine. The Synod stated that peace in Donbas is much desired by the multimillion flock of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church and that prayers of fervent supplication for success of peacebuilding process and peace in Ukraine's east will be offered up in all churches of the UOC during divine service on Sunday.

A new composition of the Liturgical Commission was approved; decisions were taken on the order of life in monasteries; new dates of celebration of the icons of the Mother of God and new dates of the commemoration of the saints were instituted.

The Synod expressed concern over Bill 00931 of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine on preventing discrimination. The Synod noted that the draft limits the fundamental rights to the freedom of worldview and religious belief of the members of the UOC, called people's deputies not to vote in favour of the bill and stated that even in case of its passing people whose life does not conform with Christian morals or their persuasions run contrary to the dogma of the Orthodox Church will not hold positions in the Ukrainian Orthodox Church.

The Synod elected three new vicar bishops in the dioceses of Kiev, Lugansk and Chernigov.

At the end of the session the Synod heard reports on the activity of the Synodal institutions of the UOC for 2019.

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