



## **His Beatitude Metropolitan Sawa of Warsaw and All Poland greets Primate of Ukrainian Orthodox Church with his Name Day and 75th birthday**

*Given below is the text of the message of greetings from the Primate of the Polish Orthodox Church on the occasion of the Name Day and 75<sup>th</sup> birthday of His Beatitude Metropolitan Onufry of Kiev and All Ukraine.*

Your Beatitude:

The Metropolitan See of Kiev is an heir of the apostolic ministry and a successor of the thousand-years-old history, spiritual wealth and ascetic deeds of the Venerable Fathers of the Kiev Caves Lavra. According to the chronicle, the Holy Apostle Andrew said, standing at the majestic hills: “Do you see these mounts? On these mounts the Divine grace will shine forth; here God will build a great city and many churches.” And that exactly what happened.

We know how difficult the historical journey of the holy Church in the Ukrainian lands was during the periods of persecutions, Unia, wars and instability. And today she is also suffering great ordeals and facing major developments. However, the Lord has never abandoned the God-loving and faithful people of the Ukrainian land.

Throughout its history Kiev has been an Orthodox city, from which Orthodoxy would spread to the neighbouring peoples, including the eastern part of the Polish–Lithuanian Commonwealth, Poland. Thanks to the labours of Father Anthony, the Kievan land became a blooming centre of monastic life, with its fruits appearing all over the world, including at the Polish Orthodox monasteries in Supraśl and Jabłeczna. And today the Holy Kiev-Caves Lavra remains a centre of spiritual wealth, attracting millions of people from every corner of the Earth. The Lord granted unto the Ukrainian land a considerable number of archpastors and pastors who, each in his own time, performed their service for the good of the Holy Church and people, often laying down their life for Orthodoxy and becoming models of faithfulness to the Church. This imposes obligations.

Your Beatitude, the archpastoral ministry is super-important and responsible at any time. The Church of Christ, established on the corner stone of confessional faith of millions of zealots of piety, has always been glorious in the deeds of its best representatives – selfless servants of God. The fiery gift of faith and spiritual strength, received by the apostles on the day of the Holy Pentecost, has been preserved

and passed down by their successors – bishops – for two thousand years of the historical being of the Holy Orthodox Church. Great and glorious, as well as hard and sorrowful, is the ministry of a bishop of the Church of Christ, even more so of a Primate of a Church, upon whom the Lord lays a particular responsibility for maintaining peace and welfare of the entire ecclesiastical community.

Your Beatitude, the time of your archpastoral service has been a most difficult period for Ukraine. It is of utmost importance at this hard time of confrontation among brothers and political turbulence to preserve the unity of the Orthodox nation and purity of the Orthodox faith of Christ. The world Orthodox today devotes all its attention to the Ukrainian alarming situation and in every way possible supports the Canonical Holy Apostolic Church of Ukraine. The Orthodox Church of Poland is with you, praying for you and for all the Ukrainian people. Through your ministry, example and exhortation you emit the bright rays of grace for the entire Ukrainian society, showing by the example of your own life how to bear a cross of life.

Today, on your Name Day and your 75<sup>th</sup> birthday, we are lifting up prayers in gratitude to Christ the Chief Shepherd, as under Your Beatitude's leadership and spiritual guidance the Ukrainian Orthodox Church remains faithful to the holy canons in the plenitude of the sacred teaching of the Universal Orthodox Church.

On the occasion of your 75<sup>th</sup> birthday and the commemoration day of your heavenly patron I wish you on my behalf and on behalf of the whole Polish Orthodox Church good health, peace of mind and God's help in carrying the heavy cross of the Primate of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church. May St Onuphrius the Great, your heavenly patron, help Your Beatitude perform your archpastoral service for the good of the Holy Orthodox Church and the Plenitude of the Universal Canonical Orthodoxy.

Today we are praying for you and for all the Ukrainian people at the Jabłeczna Monastery of St Onuphrius the Great on his commemoration day.

Many and good years to you, Your Beatitude!

With love in Christ,

**+SAWA,**

**Metropolitan of Warsaw and All Poland**