THE RUSSIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH
Department for External Church Relations

Primate of Serbian Orthodox Church greets His Beatitude Metropolitan Onufry of Kiev and All Ukraine with his Name Day

His Holiness Patriarch Irinej of Serbia sent a message to the Primate of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church, His Beatitude Metropolitan Onufry of Kiev and All Ukraine, greeting him with his Name Day. The text of the message is given below.

Your Beatitude Onufry, Metropolitan of Kiev and All Ukraine, Beloved Brother in Christ and Concelebrant:

Kissing you with love in Christ, we cordially and warmly greet you.

I am pleased with this opportunity to greet Your Beatitude today with your spiritual celebration –commemoration day of your heavenly patron.

This feast is the day of glorification of your spiritual labours, the day of celebration of the monastic vows of chastity, holiness and prayer, which you took. For each monk such day is a gleam of the future ineffable heavenly joy that the Lord has prepared for those who love Him (1 Cor 2:9).

You embarked on the monastic path while studying at the Moscow theological schools in the abode of the Holy Trinity and St. Sergius – the greatest Russian saint who united the Russian people through prayer and piety. There you were growing, in order to return later to your native land and bring the spiritual gift of St. Sergius to the western territories of Rus', to the land of Chernovtsy and Bukovina, where you honourably performed your hierarchical ministry and from where you were taken to the See of Kiev, mother of the Russian cities.

You are known in the Serbian Church as an outstanding archpastor who leads thousands of new confessors of the Orthodox faith, courageously opposing the foes of Orthodoxy. A severe test of faith, pain and sorrow faced the land of Ukraine. However, we all – Our Humility, as well as our Holy Synod, all the archpastors of the Serbian Church, all our monastics, all our clergy and all our pious faithful – believe in the triumph of Christ and pray for the salvation of the Holy Rus', whose heart is Kiev. God willing, your flock will come out of this terrible fight, crowned with glory and strengthened spiritually, in the blessed revival, honour and majesty.

Praying for this in heaven are the hosts of saints pleasing unto God, and here, on earth, are all of us, the unworthy. I am praying that the Lord, Judge and Master of Heroic Feat, grant you spiritual joy and bodily strength so that for many and good years you may rightly divide the word of Christ's truth at the sacred Kievan font.

Your brother in prayer and concelebrant, always faithful in Christ's love,

+IRINEJ

Archbishop of Peć

Metropolitan of Belgrade and Karlovci

Patriarch of Serbia

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