



## **Representative of Ukrainian Orthodox Church to European international organizations holds meetings at Council of Europe**

From February 27 to 28, 2019, Bishop Victor of Baryshevka, representative of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church to European international organizations, was on a working visit to Strasbourg. He began his visit with a prayer at the Divine Liturgy on the commemoration day of St. Cyril Equal-to-the-Apostles the Enlightener of the Slavs, at the new church of All Saints in Strasbourg. During the service, an ardent prayer was lifted up for the suffering Orthodox faithful in Ukraine.

On February 27, Bishop Victor had meetings with Mr. Christos Giakoumopoulos, Director General for Human Rights and Rule of Law, Mr. Christophe Poirel, Director of the Human Rights Directorate, and Mr. Regis Brillat, Special Advisor of the Council of Europe Secretary General for Ukraine.

On February 28, Bishop Victor met with Ms. Dunja Mijatović, Council of Europe Commissioner for Human Rights and her staff. During his meeting the Ukrainian hierarch was accompanied by Hegumen

Philip (Riabyikh), Russian Orthodox Church representative to the Council of Europe.

Bishop Victor informed the high-ranking European officials about the situation of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church at the present time and the difficulties encountered by the clergy and laity of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church in liturgical celebrations and confession of the faith in Ukraine. The sides discussed possible ways of preventing and banning violations of the rights of the faithful of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church and ways out of the present church crisis in Ukraine. His Eminence conveyed materials recording the violations and his appeal to international officials to help defend legitimacy and rights of the faithful.

Hegumen Philip, on his part, informed the Council of Europe representatives about the monitoring of violations of the rights of Orthodox Christians in Europe. The sides agreed to continue contacts concerning human rights problems, the website of the Strasbourg representation of the Russian Orthodox Church reports.

*DECR Communication Service*

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