



## **Bishops' Council of Polish Orthodox Church bans its clerics from entering into liturgical communion with Ukrainian schismatics that received Constantinople's recognition**

On the 15<sup>th</sup> of November 2018, the Bishops' Council of the Polish Orthodox Church discussed the situation which had arisen due to the recent developments in the ecclesiastical life in Ukraine.

As was reported earlier, on the 11<sup>th</sup> of October the Synod of the Patriarchate of Constantinople made a decision to “reinstate to their hierarchical or priestly rank” the leaders of the Ukrainian schism and their followers and to “restore to communion with the Church” their faithful, and confirmed its intention to “proceed to the granting of Autocephaly to the Church of Ukraine.” Moreover, in defiance of the canonical norms that regulate the life of the Orthodox Church, the Patriarchate of Constantinople announced the establishment of its “Stavropegon” in Kiev, in the territory of another Church, and the annulment of the document on the transfer of the Kiev Metropolia to the jurisdiction of the Moscow Patriarchate, issued more than 300 years ago. For that reason, on the 15<sup>th</sup> of October the Holy Synod of the Russian Orthodox Church acknowledged the impossibility to continue the Eucharistic communion with Constantinople. And on the 13<sup>th</sup> of November the Council of Bishops of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church adopted the Resolution which reads: “We consider inadmissible the unlawful interference of the Patriarchate of Constantinople in the internal affairs of another Local Church and the attempts to resolve the Ukrainian ecclesiastical issue with the involvement of state authorities and schismatics, while ignoring the voice of the canonical Ukrainian Orthodox Church.”

Taking in consideration the common concern of the Local Churches over the unstable ecclesiastical situation in Ukraine that has a destructive impact on the life of the whole Orthodoxy, the Bishops' Council of the Polish Orthodox Church once again called for the convening of the Synaxis of Primates of the Orthodox Churches, “so that they might together, in the spirit of evangelical love, in humility and in one mind, preserving the dogmatic and canonical teaching and in mutual respect peacefully settle the issue of divided Orthodoxy in the Ukrainian land.”

As the Council stated, the defrocked bishops and priests cannot be leaders in settling the ecclesiastical situation in Ukraine. “Their actions cause even greater confusion and discords,” the communiqué issued by the Polish Orthodox Church reads.

According to the decision of the Bishops' Council, priests of the Polish Orthodox Church "are banned from entering into liturgical and prayerful communion with the 'clergy' of the so-called Kievan Patriarchate and the so-called Autocephalous Orthodox church, which have done much evil in the past."

As is known, on the 7<sup>th</sup> of November the Bishops' Council of the Serbian Orthodox Church also expressed its position concerning the actions of the Patriarchate of Constantinople in Ukraine. As it is pointed out in the issued document, the Council of the Serbian Church does not recognize the leaders of the schismatic groups, Philaret Denisenko and Makariy Maletich, and their followers as Orthodox bishops and clerics and "therefore does not accept the liturgical and canonical communion with them and their supporters."

*DECR Communication Service*

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