



Some 250 thousand faithful take part in procession with cross in Kiev on occasion of 1030th anniversary of Baptism of Rus'

On July 27, 2018, on the eve of the celebrations devoted to the 1030th anniversary of the Baptism of Rus' and the commemoration day of the Holy Prince Vladimir Equal-to-the-Apostles, the Primate of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church, His Beatitude Onufry, Metropolitan of Kiev and All Ukraine, presided over a thanksgiving at the monument to the Baptizer of Rus' on St. Vladimir Hill in Kiev.

Praying together with His Beatitude were hierarchs and clergy of Local Orthodox Churches and all the dioceses of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church, dozens of thousands of Orthodox faithful from all the regions in Ukraine and pilgrims from Byelorussia, Moldavia, Romania and other countries.

After the thanksgiving, Metropolitan Onufriy addressed the flock with words of greetings and edification, saying in particular, 'Our ancestors lost the right notions of God and left for heathenism but the Holy Prince Vladimir rightened the human paths so that they could lead to God and the grace of the Holy Spirit. The prince himself changed in a radical way after his baptism to become a different man: from a brutal and sin-loving man he became a noble, merciful man who loves God and his neighbour. He became 'the Red (or Fair) Sun', as the chronicle names him. As successors of the Holy Prince Vladimir, we should seek to be like him. We should eradicate rage, hatred, enmity in us and teach ourselves to love God, to respect, tolerate and love our neighbours. On this the whole humanity is built. May God, through the intercession of the Holy Prince Vladimir Equal-to-the-Apostles preserve all those who have come to Kiev today to participate in the feast!'

Then the Primate of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church led a thousands-strong procession with the cross and wonder-working shrines to the Kiev-Caves Monastery of the Dormition.

The solemn process walked along the central streets in Kiev and at the Station Cross in Grushevsky Street, Metropolitan Onufry, together with all the clergy and laity, lifted up prayers for the repose of the souls of all who died in down town Kiev during the February 2014 tragic events.

The main shrines of the procession included the relics of the Holy Most Orthodox Prince Vladimir; Holy Martyr Clement, Bishop of Rome; Protomartyr George the Conqueror; a foot of St. Andrew the First-Called; the Zimnenskaya Icon of Our Lady; and icons with parts of the relics of the Holy Martyr Vladimir,

Metropolitan of Kiev, and St. Seraphim of Sarov.

After the procession, the shrines will be available for veneration at the Refectory Church of Ss Anthony and Theodosius of Kiev-Caves Laura during All-Night Vigil, at night and during the Divine Liturgy on the following day, July 28.

In spite of the refusals of carriers and actions of officials who put obstacles on the way of the faithful of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church to the celebrations, a multitude of the faithful from all the regions in Ukraine do participate in the festivities. Moreover, quite a great number of pilgrims have arrived from other countries.

The celebrations are broadcast live by Inter TV network.

After the procession a briefing took place at the Kiev-Caves Laura, during which Metropolitan Antony of Borispil and Brovary, chancellor of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church, reported, 'According to our estimates, 250 thousand people took part in the procession. It is more than last year, and it was visible because, though Kiev streets are broad, they could not accommodate all'.

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