



## **Primates of Local Orthodox Churches express condolences over the death of people in fire at shopping centre in Kemerovo**

*On 25 March 2018, Sunday, a fire broke out in the Winter Cherry shopping centre, claiming numerous victims. Sixty-four people, mostly children, have died. March 28 was declared national day of mourning in Russia.*

*Messages of condolences keep coming to His Holiness Patriarch Kirill of Moscow and All Russia from the Primates of the Local Orthodox Churches.*

### **Orthodox Church of Constantinople:**

*Μακαριώτατε καί Αγιώτατε Αδελφέ,*

It is with a heavy heart that we learned of the devastating news concerning the fire in the Winter Cherry shopping centre, which took the lives of so many people – both children and adults. We are at a loss for words witnessing the unfathomable tragedy which the mass media has conveyed, and we remain in prayerful contemplation for the victims and their family members. As we journey towards Christ's triumphant entry into Jerusalem, we grieve as our Lord did for the death of His good friend, Lazarus, while holding within us the assurance of the Resurrection and the promise of the life to come.

In this moment of sorrow and mourning, we would like to personally convey our heartfelt condolences, as well as the collective sympathies and prayers of our Ecumenical Patriarchate. May the Lord of life and death grant eternal rest to all those who tragically lost their lives, and may He grant peace and comfort to those whose hearts have been broken and injured by these days' events. We will continue to stand in a spirit of solidarity with you and those suffering.

Expressing these sentiments of commiseration, we embrace you with a fraternal kiss in the Lord, and we remain with much fraternal love and honor.

Your venerable Beatitude's beloved brother in Christ,

**+BARTHOLOMEW**

**Archbishop of Constantinople – New Rome**

**Serbian Orthodox Church:**

Your Holiness,

With great sorrow we convey to you the most sincere condolences on our behalf and on behalf of the plenitude of the Serbian Orthodox Church over the tragedy in Kemerovo which has already claimed the lives of 64 people, mostly children.

We are praying together with you and our fraternal people of Russia for the recovery of all the injured, for the consolation of all those who lost their relatives and friends in this terrible fire, and for the repose of the souls of the victims.

Memory eternal to the victims!

Your Holiness' brother and concelebrant in Christ,

**+IRINEJ**

**Patriarch of Serbia**

**Orthodox Church of the Czech Lands and Slovakia:**

Your Holiness,

In the season of Lent, when people of God are preparing to celebrate the Radiant Resurrection of Christ – and it is already next Saturday that we will commemorate the raising of Lazarus of the Four Days – we have received the terrible news that in the city of Kemerovo people died and were injured in the fire that broke out in the shopping centre. Your Holiness, please accept the most sincere and profound condolences over this tragedy from the plenitude of our Local Church. We are praying for the soonest recovery of the injured, for the consolation of those who lost their relatives and friends, especially children, and for the repose of the souls of the innocent victims. We believe that the All-Merciful Lord will raise the souls of His servants, granting them life eternal.

**+RASTISLAV**

**Archbishop of Prešov**  
**Metropolitan of the Czech Lands and Slovakia**

**Georgian Orthodox Church:**

Your Holiness, dear brother in Christ,

The tragedy that occurred in Kemerovo on March 25, deeply affected each and every one in the world. The situation is such that words are not enough to express our feelings, and all we can do is pray.

We grieve together with you and share the sorrow of the relatives and friends of the victims, offering our prayers unto the Lord that He may rest the souls of the deceased in the dwelling of the righteous and grant peace and firm faith to their families.

With fraternal love,

**+ILIYA II**

**Catholicos-Patriarch of All Georgia**

**Romanian Orthodox Church:**

We have learned with great sorrow about the fire at the *Zimnyaya Vishnya* shopping centre in Kemerovo, on Sunday, 25 March 2018, which claimed the lives of 64 people, 41 of them children.

On behalf of the hierarchs, clergy and faithful of the Romanian Orthodox Church, and of Us, personally, we express our sincere condolences and compassion with the families of the victims and pray the Merciful God to rest the souls of the departed ones in His heavenly light.

With brotherly love in Christ, the Lord of life Who has conquered death through His Resurrection,

**+DANIEL**

**Patriarch of Romania**

**Orthodox Church in America**

Your Holiness,

Dear brother and concelebrant in the Lord,

It is with sadness and grief that I write to Your Holiness to express my condolences for the recent loss of innocent life in Kemerovo.

On behalf of the Holy Synod of Bishops, the clergy and laity of the Orthodox Church in America, I express to Your Holiness, the faithful of the Russian Orthodox Church, and the families and loved ones of those who lost their life our love, sympathy and condolences. May they find comfort and solace in Christ and His Holy Church.

It is our prayer as we prepare to welcome our Lord and Saviour into Jerusalem, and walk with him on the path to the cross and glorious resurrection, that the souls of those who have departed this life so unexpectedly are today walking in the resplendent light of Christ's triumph over sin, death and destruction.

Assuring you of my prayers for your ministry, I remain,

Your brother in Christ,

**+TIKHON**

**Archbishop of Washington**

**Metropolitan of All America and Canada**

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