Former Metropolitan Philaret of Kiev and All Ukraine: ‘I ask for your forgiveness in everything in which I sinned by word, deed and all my feelings’

The Bishop’s Council of the Russian Orthodox Church, which is taking place these days in Moscow, heard a written appeal of the former Metropolitan Philaret of Kiev and All Russia to His Holiness Patriarch Kirill of Moscow and All Russia and the episcopate of the Russian Orthodox Church.

The letter contains a request for the restoration of the Eucharistic and devotional communion with Christians in the Ukrainian church schism and for the revocation of ‘all the decisions including bans and excommunications… for the sake of achieving God-commanded peace between Orthodox Christians of the same faith and reconciliation between them’.

The letter concludes with the following words: ‘I ask for forgiveness in everything in which I sinned by word, deed and all my feelings, and in the same way I sincerely forgive everybody from my heart’.

The Bishops’ Council took in the appeal with satisfaction as a step towards overcoming the schism and restoring church communion, made by those who once fell away from the unity with the canonical Ukrainian Orthodox Church.

For conducting further negotiations with those who have fallen away from church communion, the Council established a commission, which includes Metropolitan Hilarion of Volokolamsk (chairman), Metropolitan Antoniy of Borispol and Brovary (Ukrainian Orthodox Church), Metropolitan Feodore of Podolsk and Gorodok, Metropolitan Mitrofan of Lugansk and Alchevsk (Ukrainian Orthodox Church), Archpriest Nikolay Balashov, Archpriest Nikolay Danilevich (Ukrainian Orthodox Church), and Archpriest Igor Yakimchuk (secretary).

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