



DECR chairman expresses condolences over tragedy at First Baptist Church in Sutherland Springs, USA

Metropolitan Hilarion of Volokolamsk, chairman of the Moscow Patriarchate's

Department for External Church Relations, sent a letter to Pastor Frank Pomeroy of the First Baptist Church in Sutherland Springs, Texas, USA, expressing condolences over the tragedy that had occurred there during the Sunday service. Twenty-six parishioners died in the mass shooting; over twenty people were injured. The text of the message is given below.

Pastor Frank Pomeroy

First Baptist Church in Sutherland Springs

Dear Brother in Christ,

My heart was deeply grieved as I learned about the tragedy that had occurred at a church in Sutherland Springs, Texas. The attack resulted in the death of the people who had come to the church to pray together with their families and friends in the hitherto peaceful town, whose dwellers know each other.

Among those killed was your daughter. There are no such words of consolation that can ease the pain in the hearts of the parents who lost their child. The All-Merciful God alone can console those mourning, for *He comforts us in all our afflictions, so that we may be able to comfort those who are in any affliction, with the comfort with which we ourselves are comforted by God* (2 Cor. 1:4).

I am praying to the Lord that He grant strength to you and your wife so that you may endure this affliction and render all the necessary support to the parishioners who need your help.

Please convey my most sincere and heartfelt condolences to the relatives and friends of the victims.

With love in the Lord,

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