



Moscow Patriarchate churches in Zaporozhe subjected to provocations

Archbishop Luka of Zaporozhe and Melitopol called upon the faithful to show vigilance as some groups of people collected signatures in favour of moving the Ukrainian Orthodox Church to the jurisdiction of the so-called Kiev Patriarchate. His circular letter is published on the website of the diocese of Zaporozhe.

“At a number of churches... there appeared unknown people who collected signatures allegedly ‘in behalf of the Pochaev Laura’, but they had no documents from the church authorities to the affect that their actions were blessed”, the letter states.

As the head of the diocese noted, the abbot of the Laura made no such request and actually “it is a blatant and unscrupulous speculation on the authority of the great Orthodox shrine”.

According to the ruling bishop, the same group who collected signatures “in behalf of the Laura” had advocated earlier that the St. Vladimir church of the UOC diocese of Zaporozhe should move from “the hostile Moscow Patriarchate” to “the patriotic Kiev Patriarchate”. These people, the letter states, alleged “that most of the permanent parishioners were in favour of this move and showed their signatures”.

Archbishop Luka demanded that the clergy inform their parishioners about possible provocations and pay attention to unknown personalities who appear in their churches for no apparent reason. If they try to collect any signatures, the clergy should immediately establish their identity and report to the ruling bishop. Ordinary parishioners, if asked to put their signatures under anything, also should immediately report this to the priest.

Earlier, Metropolitan Varfolomey of Rovno and Ostrog, too, addressed the clergy and faithful saying that the Ukrainian authorities ignored the requests of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church’s representatives to protect the UOC churches and clergy from the actions of schismatics. According to the information available to him, three Orthodox churches have been captured in the diocese of Rovno to date.

The Synodal Information Department, on its part, made an official statement on August pointing to the increased attacks made by the Greek Catholics and schismatics on churches and priests of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church. It noted that priests were subjected to humiliation, torture and intimidation as well as detention and interrogation, the website of RIA-Novosti new agency reports.

Source: <https://mospat.ru/en/news/51111/>