THE RUSSIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH
Department for External Church Relations

Patriarch Kirill congratulates Metropolitan Onufry on his election to the throne of Metropolitans of Kiev and All Russia

On August 17, the enthronement of His Beatitude Metropolitan Onufry of Kiev and All Ukraine took place at the Kiev Laura of the Dormition, who was elected Primate of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church by the Council of Bishops on August 13, 2014.

His Holiness Patriarch Kirill of Moscow and All Russia sent the following congratulatory message to Metropolitan Onufry:

Your Beatitude,

Dear Vladyka:

On behalf of the plenitude of the Russian Orthodox Church I cordially congratulate you on your election to the Throne of their Beatitudes Metropolitans of Kiev and All Ukraine.

The Council of wise archpastors has entrusted you with the fate of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church at a time so difficult in the history of Ukraine, *in the midst of a very severe trial* (2 Cor. 8:2) when her people are divided and engulfed in a bloody strife, when people's hearts, coarsened in disputes about the ways of earthly human truth, often do not hear the humble word of the Holy Church of God about the truth of heavenly justice.

In a region where Holy Rus' was born in the Kiev baptismal font, the blood of Orthodox pastors and faithful is being spilt. In the place, from which Christ's word of love spread to the whole Rus', love has grown scarce and brother has risen against brother. In ruins are lying houses and holy churches in the east of the country. Every day, people are perishing and the groans of the wounded and the lament of mothers are filling the Ukrainian land. The spiritual wounds of the Ukrainian people are open and

bleeding. Being elected now to the throne of the Mother of Russian cities, you have been called by God Himself to heal these wounds with love and wisdom, with the salutary word of the Gospel to become the father and pastor for all your children and to stand guard over the unity of the Church and the people of God.

Assuring you of my invariable support, I prayerfully wish Your Beatitude physical and spiritual strength, prowess in your prayers for your flock and for God's inexhaustible help in your archpastoral efforts. In memory of today's historic event, I give you an archpastoral crosier so that strengthened by the grace of the Holy Spirit, you may worthily and successfully *be shepherd of the church of God, which he bought with his own blood* (Acts 20:28).

With love in the Lord,

+ KIRILL

Patriarch of Moscow and All Russia

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