Primates of the Serbian and Polish Orthodox Churches respond to the election of Locum Tenens of the Kievan Metropolitan See

The Primates of the Serbian and Polish Orthodox Churches have sent messages to His Holiness Patriarch Kirill of Moscow and All Russia responding to the election of Metropolitan Onufry of Chernovtsy and Bukovina as Locum Tenens of the Kievan Metropolitan See due to the illness of His Beatitude Metropolitan Vladimir of Kiev and All Ukraine.

On behalf of the Serbian people and the Serbian Church, His Holiness Patriarch Irinej expressed deep concern over fratricidal hatred and confusion reigning in Ukraine. He recalled with grief that Serbia had experienced the similar situation and was left with grave wounds which have not been healed. All this happened in Serbia and is happening now in Ukraine because certain people believed false promises of the politicians rather than the centuries-old tradition and experience of the Orthodox Church.

Patriarch Irinej thinks that the foes of Orthodoxy, envious of the pan-Orthodox celebration of the 1025th anniversary of the Baptism of Rus', have intentionally led the believers into temptation in Kiev on the eve of Lent.

The Primate of the Serbian Church prays to the Lord to grant Metropolitan Onufry the audacity in prayers and strength for spiritual struggle for making the pious people of Ukraine listen to their archpastor and unite their hearts and minds for the sake of peace and good of Orthodoxy.

His Beatitude Metropolitan Sawa of Warsaw and All Poland wrote in his message: 'The Polish Orthodox Church prays for the health of Metropolitan Vladimir and for successful administration of the Kievan Metropolia by Metropolitan Onufry who has been entrusted with responsibility for the Church at the hard time for the Ukrainian people.' Metropolitan Sawa wished the Primate of the Russian Orthodox Church 'the abundant God's help so necessary for solving the problems of Holy Orthodox in Ukraine.'

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