An old church captured by schismatics in Vinnitsa region stands empty



The Ukrainian Orthodox Church's parish whose church of God's Prophet Elias at the Strelchintsy village, Vinnitsa region, was captured by 'OCU' supporters, has not only survived but also multiplied, reports the UOC Information-Education Department with reference to the website of the Union of Orthodox Journalists.

It is painful that the church of Prophet Elias with its 200 years-long history is standing empty, said Archpriest Pavel Perlevanyi, a cleric of the Diocese of Tulchin, the rector of the captured church.

Schismatics closed the old country church as far back as three years ago. According to Archpriest Pavel, since that time the village has been divided and now the faithful of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church and the 'OCU' supporters even go to different shops.

'We hold services in the court in front of the church. In summer, nightingales sing along with the choir and in winter the frosty wind does it. However, the community has not only survived but also multiplied. We had with us even children of parishioners who came from Germany, when we went to Kiev for the Great Procession with the Cross.

The parish of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church in the Strelchintsy village continues struggling for the church in courts. Behind them are already 16 sittings of the court and heaps of papers, but as Father Pavel noted 'we hope that law will prevail'.

He explained that ‘OCU’ representatives come to the captured church very rarely: in 2019, they came five times; in 2020 they never came at all. This year, there was a visiting ‘OCU priest’ but he refused ‘to celebrate’ as only three persons came to him.

DECR Communication Service

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