His Holiness Patriarch Kirill: Patriarch Bartholomew has lapsed into schism



Among the most important tasks facing the Department for External Church Relations of the Moscow Patriarchate is “the work to overcome the schisms in the Universal Orthodoxy, which were generated by the unlawful, anti-canonical and, I would say, senseless invasion of the Patriarch of Constantinople into Ukraine”, noted His Holiness Patriarch Kirill of Moscow and All Russia on September 27, 2021, during the ceremony of presenting church awards to the DECR chairman, Metropolitan Hilarion of Volokolamsk and his vice-chairmen - Archbishop Leonid of Klin. Archpriest Nikolay Balashov, and Archimandrite Philaret (Bulekov).

“I will dare say so because I know Patriarch Bartholomew only too well - probably, he was guided not by his own reason and not by his own will”, the Primate of the Russian Orthodox Church said.

At the same time, he rejected the allegations that, being under an external pressure, the Patriarch of Constantinople could not act otherwise: “And how did we managed to act otherwise when living in an atheistic state? You will not scare us by any campfire story, as we went through everything and did not stop communion with any Local Orthodox Church, which in our country were often called “henchmen of the American imperialism”. We maintained these relations, visited one another and invited their delegations to our country. Therefore, when we are told that today Patriarch Bartholomew ostensibly could not act otherwise, hinting at mighty outside forces, I do not accept this argument. Among

Patriarchs of Constantinople, there were martyrs and confessors and one of them, Patriarch Gregorios, was hanged up on the Patriarchate's gates. Constantinople has always been for us a stronghold of Orthodoxy".

"And we humanly very much upset by the fact that today the Patriarch of Constantinople has lapsed into schism because he took communion together with schismatics and recognized self-ordained clergy who do not have lawful consecration by canonical hierarchs", His Holiness stated.

At the same time His Holiness stressed, "Aware of our truth, convinced that we stand on the unshakable foundation of holy canons, we should seek pastorally and humanly to overcome this difficult time in the inter-Orthodox relations, because in Greece, just as in other countries influenced by the Patriarch of Constantinople, there are our brothers and sisters, devoted monks and nuns, and it is a great sorrow for us that the mistakes of one make others suffer".

There is a considerable work ahead to be done by the Department for External Church Relations: while sticking to the fundamental canonical attitude, to do all possible to help Universal Orthodoxy come out of the grave crisis in which it has found itself, noted the Primate of the Russian Orthodox Church.

Each Local Orthodox Church has her own problems and very complicated ones, though not so visible as they were, for instance, for the Russian Church in the Soviet period, Patriarch Kirill recalled, emphasizing, "For this reason, our common solidarity and showing love for one another are very much important for strengthening Universal Orthodoxy".

DECR Communication Service

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