



## In Cherkassy Region in Ukraine, a local official deranged the consecration of a church



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The chairman of the Shramkovka united territorial community upset the Great Consecration of a new church of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church in the Kononovka village of the Cherkassy region in Ukraine, Pravoslavnaya zhizn' portal reports.

On July 2, 2022, Metropolitan Feodosy of Cherkassy and Kanev, clergy of the Drabov and Zolotonosha deaneries together with parishioners who had built the church, as well rector of the church Father Igor Basyuk approached the Church of St. Nicholas the Wonderworker to celebrate its consecration, but their way to the new church was blocked personally by the head of the Shramkovka territorial community, Anatoly Kulya and a small but noisy support group.

He declared that 'during the martial law, it is prohibited to hold any mass events including religious ones' and proposed to the indignant parishioners that they go home. All this happened amid hostile cries

of the activists group.

The summoned police did not interfere in the incident and calmly watched the violations of the civil rights of Ukrainian citizens. The parishioners could have pressed back the law-defying persons and entered the church for the divine service but Metropolitan Feodosy did not give his blessing on acting like this, saying that 'a house of God should be consecrated in peace and harmony, not under ones' bad language even if not coming from us'.

According to the report of the Union of Orthodox Journalists with a reference to the rector of the parish, even after the archpastoral administrator of the Diocese of Cherkassy, the aggression of the disrupters of the divine service did not stop. They continued offending the clergy in the presence of parishioners and small children who were traumatized by what they saw. Metropolitan Feodosy's junior sub-deacon Sergiy shared his feelings. A thirteen-year old teenager, he experienced a great stress when he saw that his father, a priest, was locked inside the church, while the furious crowd could any moment burst in to lynch the clergy.

While the 'activists' had it out in the street with the faithful of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church, the clergy who remained in the closed church held a service of prayer to St. Nicholas the Wonderworker and after it decided to celebrate the Divine Liturgy. Because it was impossible to secure the access into the church for the invited clergy and parishioners, they were given communion through a window.

The liturgical singing was continually interrupted by cries of the 'activists' who openly declared that they did not wish to pray and they did not need a divine service and shouted out stereotyped anti-church slogans.

'Standing in the street', having experienced a nervous shock, people were praying and crying', recounted the rector of the church Father Igor Basyuk. The community of the St. Nicholas church do not lose hope that the people who disrupted the divine service would repent and that the parishioners of the church would soon be able to share with the clergy the joy of common prayer.

'The fact of the crime committed with the participation of an official - the chairman of the Territorial Community, who as part of a group violated the constitutional rights and freedoms of Ukrainian citizens and a number of provisions in the law, including those of the Criminal Code, as well as the fact of the inactivity of the police during the commitment of a crime (Article 367I. UCC), will be reported in an appropriate statement to the Procurator's Office, the Police Directorate and the Ukrainian Security Service', the press-service of the Diocese of Cherkassy reports.

It is noted that the situation in the Kononovka village has shown once again "that the Church of Christ

has always been and will be persecuted by people of 'this world' for all her good works and the world outlook she will take in society".

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