



## **The Ukrainian Ministry of Culture officially banned teachers and students of the Kiev Theological Academy and Seminary from entering Lavra**



**DECR Communication Service, 30.08.23.**

The Ministry of Culture of Ukraine has officially banned teachers and students of the Kiev Theological Academy and Seminary from entering and staying on the territory of the Kiev Pechersk Lavra, where the educational buildings are located. This is reported by the Union of Orthodox Journalists with reference to the website of the Kiev Theological Academy and Seminary.

Such an order was issued by the Ministry of Culture in a letter signed by acting Minister of Culture Rostislav Karandeev.

Since the unilateral cancellation of the state's agreement with the Kiev Pechersk Lavra in March of this year, the rector of the Kiev Theological Academy and Seminary, Archbishop Sylvester, has repeatedly appealed to various authorities to prevent the closure of the Kiev Theological Schools.

Nevertheless, when the Reserve closed the entrance to the Lower Lavra grounds to all visitors on the 11<sup>th</sup> of August, access to the Academy buildings to all faculty, students and staff was also blocked.

The press service of the Kiev Theological Academy and Seminary reports that on the same day the

rector "sent a letter to the Ministry of Culture and Information Policy of Ukraine, the Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine and the State Service for Ethnopolitics and Freedom of Conscience with a historical justification of the legal relationship between the KTA and the Reserve, as well as with a request to consider the possibility of unimpeded access to the buildings of the Kiev Theological Academy and Seminary for students, teachers and working staff".

In response, Acting Minister of Culture R. Karandeev sent a letter to the Academy of the Reserve dated 17.08.2023, where teachers, students and staff of Kiev Theological Schools are equated with visitors to Lavra, and access to the territory of the monastery and the Academy buildings is prohibited to them.

On the 19<sup>th</sup> of August, the Kiev Theological Academy and Seminary sent another letter to the previous addressees, pointing out the illegality of defining teachers, students, and staff as visitors to the Lavra, as well as a new request to grant them unimpeded access to the buildings of the Kiev Theological Schools.

"However, in response, the Ministry of Culture received a letter that their position remained unchanged - teachers, students and staff of Kiev Theological Schools are defined as visitors to the Lavra, and therefore access to the territory of the monastery and the Academy's buildings is prohibited to them," reports the press service of the Kiev Theological Academy and Seminary.

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