



Archpriest Nikolai Balashov: The Moscow Patriarchate supports the aim of the Orthodox Church of Jerusalem to ensure a conciliar discussion of the problems that have arisen within the worldwide Orthodox family.



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Advisor to the Patriarch of Moscow and All Rus' Archpriest Nikolai Balashov commented upon the recent initiatives by His Beatitude the Patriarch of the Holy City of Jerusalem and All Palestine Theophilos III, who expressed his willingness to ensure peace in Ukraine and a conciliar discussion of the problems which exist within worldwide Orthodoxy.

Several days ago, in Rome, Patriarch of Jerusalem Theophilos declared that the Church of Jerusalem was willing to act as mediator in overcoming the military conflict in Ukraine and in obtaining peace by means of negotiations, as well as wishing to continue dialogue aimed at averting “the danger of schism within the body of the Orthodox Church.” The Patriarch stated that he intended to do everything within his power to “heal the relationships within the Orthodox family.”

The Russian Orthodox Church welcomes any mediatory efforts aimed at developing dialogue and the

establishing of a just peace in Ukraine. It is with the greatest respect that we treat the initiatives coming from the Patriarch of the Holy City of Jerusalem, the Primate of the most ancient of Churches which is the Mother of all the Christian Churches.

The Moscow Patriarchate also supports the aim of the Church of Jerusalem in enabling a conciliar discussion of the problems which have arisen within the worldwide Orthodox family. A key role in ensuring this discussion has many times been played by Jerusalem. We recall too the Amman meeting of the Primates and representatives of a number of the local Orthodox Churches which took place at the initiative of Patriarch Theophilus in 2020. It was a vital step in the sphere of inter-Orthodox communication, and this step must find its continuation. It is impossible to overestimate the importance of dialogue between the Churches, even if this dialogue is fraught with many difficulties in bringing it to fruition, while the Primates of some of the Churches have already beforehand declared that they in principle refuse to discuss the decisions made.

We value highly the labours of the Patriarch of Jerusalem in the cause of preserving, protecting and strengthening the Christian presence in the Holy Land and the Middle East in general. The Russian Orthodox Church will henceforth in whatever way possible support these courageous endeavours, which have evoked a deep response in the hearts of our compatriots, who with love and reverence honour the Holy Sepulchre and other common Christian holy sites, the guardian of which is the Patriarch of Jerusalem.

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