



THE RUSSIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH
Department for External Church Relations

Circular letter of the Moscow Patriarchate Chancellor on prayers for hierarchs and clerics of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church held prisoners



DECR Communication Service, 30.10.2023.

The circular letter of Metropolitan Grigoriy, chancellor of the Moscow Patriarchate, dated October 26, 2023, has been published on the official website of the Russian Orthodox Church.

To: All Diocesan Bishops of the Russian Orthodox Church

Circular letter to follow up

Re: Request to remember in prayers the Right Reverend archpastors and clerics of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church held prisoners

Your Eminences and Your Graces:

Over the past eighteen months, persecution of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church by the Ukrainian state authorities has taken a new turn: discriminatory bills related to the canonical Church are being passed, intolerance to clerics and flock and hatred for them are being stirred up, illegal seizure of religious sites is taking place, searches are being conducted at the places of residence of hierarchs and clerics.

Clergymen come under crude pressure from special services by humiliating interrogation and from over-excited mob that often unites schismatics with the most exotic pagans and with people alien to any faith.

The incidents of arrests and beating of clergymen of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church and desecration of the holy sites are being recorded. Legal actions have been taken against some archpastors of the canonical Church. The ruling hierarch of the diocese of Cherkassy is under house arrest, while Metropolitan Ionafan of Tulchin and Bratslav has been sentenced to five years in prison.

Orthodox communities are being evicted from churches and monasteries. The ancient Kiev Lavra of the Caves is under the threat of closure, while its abbot, Metropolitan Pavel of Vyshgorod, earlier placed in preventive detention, is now under house arrest.

With the blessing of the Primate of the Russian Orthodox Church, I ask all of you, dear bishops, to follow the Bishops' Conference held on 19 July 2023 in calling clergymen, monastics and laypersons in dioceses entrusted to your care to offer up augmented prayers for the Right Reverend archpastors, pastors, monastics and laypersons of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church, who despite threats, slander, and persecution are striving to preserve church unity, and especially for those who perform the feat of confessors by courageously raising their voice in defense of this unity.

With love in the Lord,

**+ Grigoriy,
Metropolitan of Voskresensk,
Chancellor of the Moscow Patriarchate**