



## **Metropolitan Jonathan of Tulchyn and Bratslav characterized the words of Patriarch Bartholomew, who condemned the confessional feat of the Ukrainian hierarchs, as blasphemous**



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At the request of a human rights group of clerics and laity, Metropolitan Jonathan of Tulchyn and Bratslav assessed the words of Patriarch Bartholomew, who on the 15<sup>th</sup> of October 2023, at a meeting with the clerics of the Spanish and Portuguese Metropolitanate of the Patriarchate of Constantinople in Madrid, **said** that he considered the criminal prosecution of the hierarchs of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church 'just and justified'. The response was **published by** the website of the Tulchyn diocese.

Metropolitan Jonathan is convinced that the words of condemnation against the confessional feat of Ukrainian hierarchs who are defending Orthodoxy and their canonical Church are deliberately slanderous, they are sinful and even blasphemous. On the 7<sup>th</sup> of August 2023, the 75-year-old seriously

ill bishop and a Church composer widely known in the Orthodox world, **was sentenced** on absurd charges to five years' imprisonment with confiscation of property.

Vladyka emphasised: "The strange and unreasonable words of Patriarch Bartholomew in Madrid are like a blunt and rusty sword, which ruthlessly and cruelly wounded the souls of the persecuted hierarchs of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church, its clerics and laity both in Ukraine and in distant countries. He spiritually and symbolically tore the mantle of the High Priest of Constantinople in two, and now, with its inappropriate image, it has lost the gracious power of the mantle of the holy prophet Elijah, the defender of Faith and Truth, and, tainted by lies, cries to Heaven for the fall of its proud former lord to the sinful earth".

Many archpastors, clerics and laity of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church have finally lost confidence in the objectivity of the judgements of the Patriarch of Constantinople "after the horrifying words of the head of the Phanar to his clerics in Madrid against the background of pogroms and seizures of churches and monasteries, expulsion of the theological seminary and spiritual academy from Kiev-Pechersk Lavra, against the background of searches, arrests and trials of bishops of the canonical UOC, in light of weeping and grief of the faithful of the UOC... Will it be flattering for him to pray to God in the empty churches of Lavra?", - asks the hierarch.

"Being a wretched and unworthy man, who was unjustly sentenced by a Vinnytsia judge to five years of imprisonment and who at one time received a worthy Church order from the hands of the High Priest of the New Rome, I dare to say to him: You are mistaken! Come to your senses and turn from the way of sinners, wash your eyes with the water of repentance and the peace of God! And then you will be cleansed from the sin of perjury against prisoners of conscience and from the disgrace in the ages to come!" - noted Metropolitan Jonathan of Tulchyn and Bratslav.

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