



## **Metropolitan Eugene of Tallinn calls on the faithful to observe one-day fasting vigil in view of new threats against Estonian Orthodox Church**



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Metropolitan Eugene of Tallinn and All Estonia sent a message to the clergy and laity of the Estonian Orthodox Church, which is under mounting pressure, and called for a one-day fasting vigil, [patriarchia.ru](http://patriarchia.ru) reports.

“Lent is coming to an end. It has been associated not only with bodily abstinence, but also with our manifold concerns for the future of our Church. We have tried to reduce tensions in society, but the danger of upheavals in church life has not passed. We have initiated the process of negotiations and hope that with God’s help we will be able to find ways to overcome the crisis,” the letter reads.

The Primate of the Estonian Orthodox Church encouraged everyone to stay calm and loyal to the Supreme Authority of the Church and to remember that the best way to overcome every tribulation is

through fasting and prayer.

“Therefore, I bless all those who feel strong enough to observe a one-day strict fast on 23<sup>rd</sup> April. And I ask parish priests to celebrate a moleben at 6 p.m. that day (the text is to be sent later),” Metropolitan Eugene also wrote in his message.

For a long time, the Estonian Orthodox Church has been under pressure from the Estonian authorities.

On 11<sup>th</sup> April, Lauri Läänemets, Minister of the Interior, when speaking on national television, called on the Parliament to “declare the Russian Orthodox Church a terrorist organization” and ban its activities.

On 18<sup>th</sup> April, the Tallinn authorities informed of the termination of the lease contract for the premises of the administrative office of the Estonian Orthodox Church of the Moscow Patriarchate. On the same day, a draft declaration condemning the Moscow Patriarchate was submitted to the Estonian Parliament.

On 23<sup>rd</sup> April, Minister Läänemets said that the Orthodox monasteries in the county that will refuse to withdraw from the jurisdiction of the Russian Orthodox Church may face coercive termination of their activities based on the authorities’ decision.

According to a number of observers, the Estonian Ministry of the Interior intends to force parishes of the Estonian Orthodox Church to sever their canonical unity with the Russian Orthodox Church.

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