



## **UOC Church of Intercession in Sutkivtsi village, Khmelnytskyi region, was seized**



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In the morning of 15<sup>th</sup> May 2024, Sutkivtsi village officials – representatives of the local administration, bailiff service, police and territorial recruitment centre – broke down doors and forced an entry into the Church of the Intercession of the Mother of God in Sutkivtsi village, Khmelnytskyi region, Ukraine. People who forcibly entered the old church declared it their property.

“Permanent parishioners of the Church of the Intercession in Sutkivtsi village have not changed their affiliation in organizational or canonical matters. On the contrary, out of their free will they remain affiliated to the Ukrainian Orthodox Church with the governing centre in the city of Kyiv in accordance with a decision adopted at the general parish meeting in 2019,” a **statement of the Khmelnytskyi Diocese says**.

Spokespersons of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church note that the Church of the Intercession in Sutkivtsi is a unique example of church architecture of the 15<sup>th</sup> – 16<sup>th</sup> centuries.

In 2021, the Grand Chamber of the Supreme Court of Ukraine dismissed a suit filed by the religious community of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church in Sutkivtsi village, Khmelnytskyi region, and upheld its re-registration as OCU community, the Union of the Orthodox Journalists **reported**.

While having lost its church building, the parish of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church in Sutkivtsi remains functioning. Divine services are to be celebrated in a room equipped for that purpose, the statement of the Khmelnytskyi Diocese also says.

«The rector and permanent parishioners hope that in future the rule of law will be restored, along with their constitutional rights to the freedom of worship, and the Church of the Intercession will be returned to them,” the statement adds.

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