**THE RUSSIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH**
Department for External Church Relations

# The Synod Acknowledged the Impossibility of Concelebration with Hierarchs of the Bulgarian Church Who Entered into Ecclesiastical Communion with Schismatics



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On May 30th, participants of the meeting of the Holy Synod of the Russian Orthodox Church heard a report by Metropolitan Anthony of Volokolamsk, Chairman of the Department for External Church Relations, on the recent concelebration of hierarchs of the Bulgarian Orthodox Church with representatives of Ukrainian schismatic communities (Journal No. 60), reports Patriarchia.ru.

On May 19, 2024, at the Valukli Monastery in Istanbul, Patriarch Bartholomew of Constantinople presided over a Liturgy in which representatives of one of the schismatic structures operating in Ukraine participated. Among the concelebrants were hierarchs of the Bulgarian Orthodox Church: Metropolitan Nicholas of Plovdiv, Metropolitan Cyprian of Stara Zagora, Metropolitan Jacob of Dorostol, Bishop Sioniy of Veliko Tarnovo, and Bishop Vissarion of Smolyan.

The Holy Synod of the Russian Orthodox Church expressed deep sorrow that the hierarchs of the

Bulgarian Orthodox Church — Metropolitan Nicholas of Plovdiv, Metropolitan Cyprian of Stara Zagora, Metropolitan Jacob of Dorostol, Bishop Sioniy of Veliko Tarnovo, and Bishop Vissarion of Smolyan — participated in a concelebration with representatives of one of the Ukrainian schismatic groups, thereby causing significant harm to the relations between the Russian and Bulgarian Orthodox Churches.

The participants of the meeting acknowledged the impossibility of concelebrating with the aforementioned hierarchs who have entered into ecclesiastical communion with schismatics.

With regret, it was noted that the Patriarchate of Constantinople continues to take actions aimed at deepening divisions within Orthodoxy.

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