THE RUSSIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH
Department for External Church Relations

The sisters of the Pyukhtitsa Monastery have once again addressed an appeal to the Estonian parliament regarding the proposed amendments to the Law on Churches and Congregations



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On February 16, 2025, the abbess of the Pyukhtitsa Convent, Mother Superior Filareta (Kalacheva), and the sisters of the monastery once again appealed to the parliament of the Republic of Estonia concerning plans to use amendments to the Law on Churches and Congregations to force the monastery to change its jurisdiction or face liquidation. The previous message was published on February 11 of this year. The new appeal to the parliament of the Republic of Estonia states:

"Dear Chairman of the Riigikogu, Lauri Hussar!

We are compelled to address you out of deep concern for the fate of our Pyukhtitsa Dormition Convent.

For over a century—134 years to be exact—it has stood in Kuremäe, on the Holy Mountain, and throughout this time, no matter what storms raged around it, no matter how wars and revolutions shook the world, and no matter how power changed hands, it has never ceased to shine with love for God, not even for a single day. No matter what darkness enveloped the world, everything here was illuminated by the light of human love for the All-Merciful God. Not for a single day did prayer cease in the monastery.

And now, suddenly, something is happening that is beyond our comprehension and pierces our hearts with sharp pain. We are being demanded to sever our canonical connection with the Russian Orthodox Church in favor of Constantinople. This is not only a violation of church canons; it is akin to forcing a person to abandon their own mother. She raised them, nurtured them throughout their life, and now—to renounce her? Is this the sin with which we must burden our souls? And for what? For the sake of our peace and prosperity?

We wish to respond with the words of Christ, who resisted temptation: 'You shall worship the Lord your God and Him only shall you serve' (Matthew 4:10). Once again, we repeat that everything being held against us is not related to our monastic deeds. We, the sisters of the Pyukhtitsa Monastery, have always been distant fr om politics and have never participated in games on the political stage.

We retreated to our cells away from the world, its passions, disputes, and conflicts, from its preoccupation with the issues of the day. In the space of our monastic life, there is only the Lord, and its foundation is prayer and labor.

Needless to say, any intrusion of the world into monastic life causes us pain and fills us with fear for the future.

The only convent that survived the Soviet era within the Russian Orthodox Church is the Pyukhtitsa Monastery. We have never forgotten this, and in our daily services, we have always prayed and continue to pray with gratitude for the country of Estonia, for its authorities, and for its noble people.

We hope that those in power will finally hear us and that the Republic of Estonia will understand our concern. There is no law that would force innocent, law-abiding monastics to renounce the commandments of Christ for the sake of the fleeting desires of politicians. We, the inhabitants of the monastery, are being placed, without our consent, into a space wh ere ignorance and new deities reside, asserting truth outside of Christ. We, the PYUKHTITSA sisters, with spiritual joy, will repeat the quiet words of the great Christian: 'I would rather remain with Christ than with truth outside of Christ.'"

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