

ORTHODOXY OR DEATH

# Persecution of Ukrainian Orthodox Church Continues: SBU Raids Target UOC Clergy and Parishioners While Armed Forces of Ukraine Shell Orthodox Church and Civilian Buildings in Donetsk

Parliamentary Committee supports ban of UOC while Ukraine military strikes target Orthodox Church and residential properties in Donetsk.



PUBLIUS  
16 DEC 2022



## Ukraine Parliamentary Committee Supports Ban on UOC

[The New Voice of Ukraine reports](#) the Parliamentary committee “backs banning the Russian branch of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church.”

This is incorrect, as there is no “Russian branch” of the canonical Ukrainian Orthodox Church.

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## Parliamentary committee backs banning Russian branch of Ukrainian Orthodox Church

December 9, 2022, 05:34 PM 711



**The Committee on Humanitarian and Information Policy of the Ukrainian parliament has supported a bill to ban religious organizations affiliated with Russia – including the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the Moscow Patriarchate (UOC-MP) – Ukrainian MP Yaroslav Zheleznyak reported via the Telegram messenger on Dec. 9.**

Zheleznyak said the decision would help to “purge the Russian World from Ukraine.”

**Read also: [Zelenskyy imposes personal sanctions against religious organizations affiliated with UOC MP](#)**

Another MP Mykola Kniazhytsky explained the committee had backed three bills which would ban the Russian Orthodox Church and its affiliated organizations, urge the government to transfer the famed Kyiv Pechersk Lavra to the Orthodox Church of Ukraine (OCU), and to facilitate the broader transition away from UOC-MP – towards the OCU.

## UOC and The Ecclesial Crisis in Ukraine

The secular and western media routinely fail to provide more context to the history of the Orthodox Church, such as how no one Patriarch has the authority to make decisions for the entire church or that the Patriarch of Constantinople declared Kiev to be subject to the Patriarchate of Moscow in the 17th century. This decision secured the autocephaly of the Russian Orthodox Church and the Moscow Patriarch.

Metr. Nikiforos discusses the fundamental canonical, ecclesial, and spiritual context of the Ukraine schism in his book *The Ecclesial Crisis in Ukraine* ([available at Holy Trinity Publications for \\$5.99](#)). Below is a short video summary of the book, via Holy Trinity Publications:

### BOOK TRAILER: The Ecclesial Crisis in Ukraine and its Solution According



The Patriarchal and Synodical Act of 1686, issued by Patriarch Dionysius IV of Constantinople, declared “that the Most Holy Eparchy of Kiev be subject to the Most Holy Patriarchal Throne of the great and God-fearing city of Muscovy (Metr. Nikiforos, *The Ecclesial Crisis in Ukraine*, p. 2).

“Additionally, to avoid misinterpretation, the Russian Church also refers to a surviving letter from Ecumenical Patriarch Dionysius IV to the czars of Russia, Ivan, and Peter Alekseyevich, in which he explicitly states who has the right to administer the holy Metropolis of Kiev. In this letter to the czar

of Muscovy, along with granting the patriarch of Moscow the right to consecrate the metropolitan of Kiev, he also grants him jurisdiction over the Metropolis of Kiev. In this letter, Patriarch Dionysius IV writes, among other things: “It is hereby granted that the holy Eparchy of Kiev be subject to the Most Holy Patriarchal Throne of the Holy and God-saved city of Muscovy... and they must recognize the Patriarch of Muscovy as their elder and head, s they are consecrated by him (Metr. Nikiforos, p. 3-4).”

An overview of how Kiev/Kyiv Metropolitan came under the jurisdiction of the Moscow Patriarchate in 1686:

## To Which Patriarchate's Ecclesiastical Jurisdiction Does Ukraine Belong ?

We must emphasize from the outset that it is universally acknowledged and undisputed that the Church of Russia, which until AD 1593 constituted a single unit with the Metropolis of Kiev, was under the canonical jurisdiction of the Ecumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople. According to historical sources, it was sixtieth in rank, and a metropolis of the Ecumenical Throne. In 1593, the four patriarchs of the East<sup>23</sup> elevated the church of Russia to a patriarchate, but the eparchy of Kiev continued to fall under the jurisdiction of the Patriarchate of Constantinople until 1686. During the seven centuries from 988 to 1686 (i.e., from the baptism of the Grand Prince of Kiev until the Patriarchal and Synodal Act of Patriarch Dionysius IV, in which the eparchy of Kiev was granted to the Russian Patriarchate), the Ecumenical Patriarchate fully exercised its canonical rights, primarily the two fundamental rights of ecclesiastical subordination. That is, the right to ordain and the right to judge bishops.

In 1686, however, the Metropolis of Kiev was united with the Russian Church. That same year, after Peter the Great annexed Ukraine to Russia, the then-patriarch of Constantinople, Dionysius IV, issued a patriarchal and synodal act declaring

that "the Most Holy Eparchy of Kiev be subject to the Most Holy Patriarchal Throne of the great and God-fearing city of Muscovy."<sup>24</sup> Since then, the ancient patriarchates of Alexandria, Antioch, and Jerusalem, and subsequently all the other autocephalous Orthodox churches, have regarded the Ukrainian church as an integral part of the Patriarchate of Moscow, respecting Moscow's right to exercise ecclesiastical jurisdiction over the entire area of Ukraine.

Today, however, certain individuals within the leadership of the Ecumenical Patriarchate, Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew himself, his theological associates, and others, do not accept this reality, claiming that the Patriarchal and Synodical Act of 1686 did not cede the Metropolis of Kiev to the Patriarchate of Moscow completely and permanently, but rather *epitropikos* [in trust],<sup>25</sup> "that it may perpetually have"<sup>26</sup> only the right to ordain and enthrone the metropolitan of Kiev whom the clergy-laity assembly elects. They claim that this fact is documented in the mention of one of the terms included in the 1686 Letter of Issue, or Act, according to which the metropolitan of Kiev should, during the divine liturgy, commemorate the ecumenical patriarch first, "as his source and authority, and as superior to all dioceses and eparchies everywhere"<sup>27</sup> and then the current patriarch of Moscow. This reference to the decision in the 1686 Letter of Issue, namely, that the patriarch of Constantinople should be commemorated first, before the patriarch of Moscow, constitutes, they note, proof of the jurisdictional dependence of the Metropolis of Kiev on the Patriarchate of Constantinople. Therefore, they insist, on account of this term, the Metropolis of Kiev was

never definitively and irrevocably ceded to the Patriarchate of Moscow.

The Orthodox Patriarchate of Moscow rejects these belated arguments from the Ecumenical Patriarchate, and points out that the text of the Patriarchal Act of 1686 does not mention any administrative authority that the Patriarchate of Constantinople retains over the ceded territory. Therefore, the wish expressed in the letter regarding the commemoration of the name of the patriarch of Constantinople first and the patriarch of Russia second has no connection to administrative responsibilities. They emphatically stress that it is not primarily the commemoration of a primate which determines a church's standing within a certain jurisdiction, but the right to ordain bishops (*jus ordinandi*) and the right to judge bishops (*jus jurandi*).

To support this argument, they refer to the distinguished professor of Church History at the University of Athens, and close associate and advisor of the Ecumenical Patriarchate, Vlasios Fidas. In less fractious times, Fidas wrote an article regarding the decree of the Third Ecumenical Council, which confirmed the autocephaly of the Church of Cyprus, noting the following: "It is clearly understood that the issue of the Church of Cyprus' administrative dependence on the jurisdiction of Antioch is inextricably linked to the canonical guarantee of its authority in the right to ordain and judge the metropolitan of Cyprus, since the fact that the Third Ecumenical Council did not cede this right to the bishop of Antioch preserved the autocephaly of the Church of Cyprus."<sup>28</sup>

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Additionally, to avoid any misinterpretation, the Russian Church also refers to a surviving letter from Ecumenical Patriarch Dionysius IV to the czars of Russia, Ivan and Peter Alekseyevich, in which he explicitly states who has the right to administer the holy Metropolis of Kiev. In this letter to the czars of Muscovy, along with granting the patriarch of Moscow the right to consecrate the metropolitan of Kiev, he also grants him jurisdiction over the Metropolis of Kiev. In this letter, Patriarch Dionysius IV writes, among other things: "It is hereby granted that this holy Eparchy of Kiev be subject to the Most Holy Patriarchal Throne of the Holy and God-saved city of Muscovy ... and they must recognize the Patriarch of Moscow as their elder and head, as they are consecrated by him ..."<sup>29</sup>

These two texts, the Moscow Patriarchate stresses, make no reference to a temporary transfer of the Metropolis of Kiev, but on the contrary, emphasize the permanent and definitive character of its ecclesiastical subordination to the Russian Church.

In order for us to answer the question of whether the Church of Ukraine is subject to the Ecumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople or to the Patriarchate of Moscow, we must, in addition to the above, refer to the so-called *Syntagmata* [Constitutions], which are widely acknowledged, not only by specialized canonists, but by all theologians, clergy and laity, academics and not, to constitute a true witness to the canonical jurisdiction of Orthodox patriarchates and autocephalous churches. Being listed in them is indisputable evidence as to where a diocese belongs. The mere listing of a metropolis in the



*Syntagmatia* of an autocephalous church, affirms, beyond any doubt, that this metropolis canonically belongs to that church.<sup>30</sup>

But what are these *Syntagmatia*, which, by common admission, have such great demonstrative power? A *Syntagmation*, according to Protopresbyter Anastasios Gotsopoulos, is the list of metropolises, archbishoprics and bishoprics, and their order of precedence within the framework of the ecclesiastical jurisdiction of the local Orthodox patriarchates and autocephalous churches. The *Syntagmatia* were formerly called *Taktika* (*Notitia Episcopatum*), but today are published under various names, including *Imerologion*, *Diptycha*, *Epeteris*, *Typike Diataxis*, etc.<sup>31</sup>

We consider it appropriate to mention here that the oldest *taktikon* is the *Ekthesis of Epiphanius* from the early seventh century, according to which thirty-three metropolises, thirty-four archbishoprics and about 354 bishoprics were subject to the throne of Constantinople. "According to the *taktikon* of the Isaurian era (*Codex Parisinus Graecus 1555A*), in the mid-ninth century the Ecumenical Throne presided over 51 metropolises, 40 archbishoprics and approximately 608 bishoprics in its jurisdiction."<sup>32</sup> Turning, then, to the *Syntagmatia*, these indisputable witnesses of the canonical jurisdiction of the Patriarchal Thrones, we find that from AD 1686 onwards, no *Syntagmation* of any church lists the church of Ukraine as an eparchy of the Ecumenical Patriarchate. From the famous 1715 *Syntagmation* of the Patriarch Hrysanthos Notaras of Jerusalem in which Ukraine is listed as an eparchy of Muscovy and not the Ecumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople, until 2018, all the *Typika*, *Imerologia*, *Diptycha*, and *Epeterides* of all

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the autocephalous Orthodox churches everywhere consider Ukraine as part of the Russian Church. All the Orthodox churches recognized that the Church of Ukraine was subject to the canonical jurisdiction of Moscow, and considered Onufry to be the only canonical metropolitan of Kiev and All Ukraine.

Thus, for over 330 years, all the autocephalous Orthodox churches, without any exception, considered the Ukrainian Church to be under the ecclesiastical jurisdiction of the Patriarchate of Moscow, not the Ecumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople.

The fact that Ukraine was canonically transferred to the Patriarchate of Moscow by Ecumenical Patriarch Dionysius IV's 1686 Patriarchal Act, was also accepted by the Ecumenical Patriarchate itself, and is listed as such in the most official way in all its *Typika*, *Imerologia*, *Diptycha*, *Epeterides*, and *Typikas Diataxis* published by the patriarchal press in Constantinople. Some examples of this are the 1797 *Syntagmaton* compiled by the ethnomartyr and hieromartyr Patriarch Gregorios V of Constantinople, as well as the *Syntagmatia* of 1829, 1896, and 1902, and all the *Syntagmatia* and *Epeterides* until 2018. In these official patriarchal publications, the Ecumenical Throne, without any reservation, accepted that Ukraine is canonically subject to the Patriarchate of Russia.

Additionally, Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew himself, in a speech to the Ukrainian people given on July 26, 2008, expressed the same ecclesiastical certainty (that Ukraine was ceded by the Ecumenical Patriarchate and now is subject to the Church of Russia). In that speech, the ecumenical patriarch stated:

*To Which Patriarchate's Ecclesiastical Jurisdiction...*

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The Ecumenical Patriarchate's sacrifice in the Orthodox Church, at the cost of its own rights, is even more clearly exemplified by the development of its relations with the eminent among the daughter Churches, the Church of Ukraine, which was under the Ecumenical Patriarchate's canonical jurisdiction for seven consecutive centuries, that is, from the baptism of the Grand Duchy of Kiev (988) until her annexation under Peter the Great (1687) to the Russian state. Indeed, for seven centuries the Mother Church offered "from her poverty".<sup>33</sup> Thus, after Ukraine's annexation to Russia, and under the pressure of Peter the Great, the Ecumenical Patriarch Dionysios IV judged that it was necessary in the circumstances of the time that the Church of Ukraine be ecclesiastically subject to the Patriarchate of Moscow.<sup>34</sup>

Moreover, in two letters of reply to the patriarch of Moscow, Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew recognized both the deposal (1992) and the anathematization (1997) that the Patriarchate of Moscow imposed on the former metropolitan of Kiev, Filaret. Responding to the first letter of Patriarch of Moscow Alexei of blessed memory regarding Filaret's deposal, Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew emphasized the following: "Our Holy Great Church of Christ recognizes the integral and exclusive jurisdiction of the Most Holy Church of Russia under your leadership regarding this issue, and accepts what has been synodically decided about the person in question, not desiring that the above cause any difficulty for our sister Church."<sup>35</sup>

In his second letter to the patriarch of Moscow (1997), he writes the following about the anathematization of Filaret: "Having received knowledge of the above decision, we will announce it to the Hierarchy of our Ecumenical throne

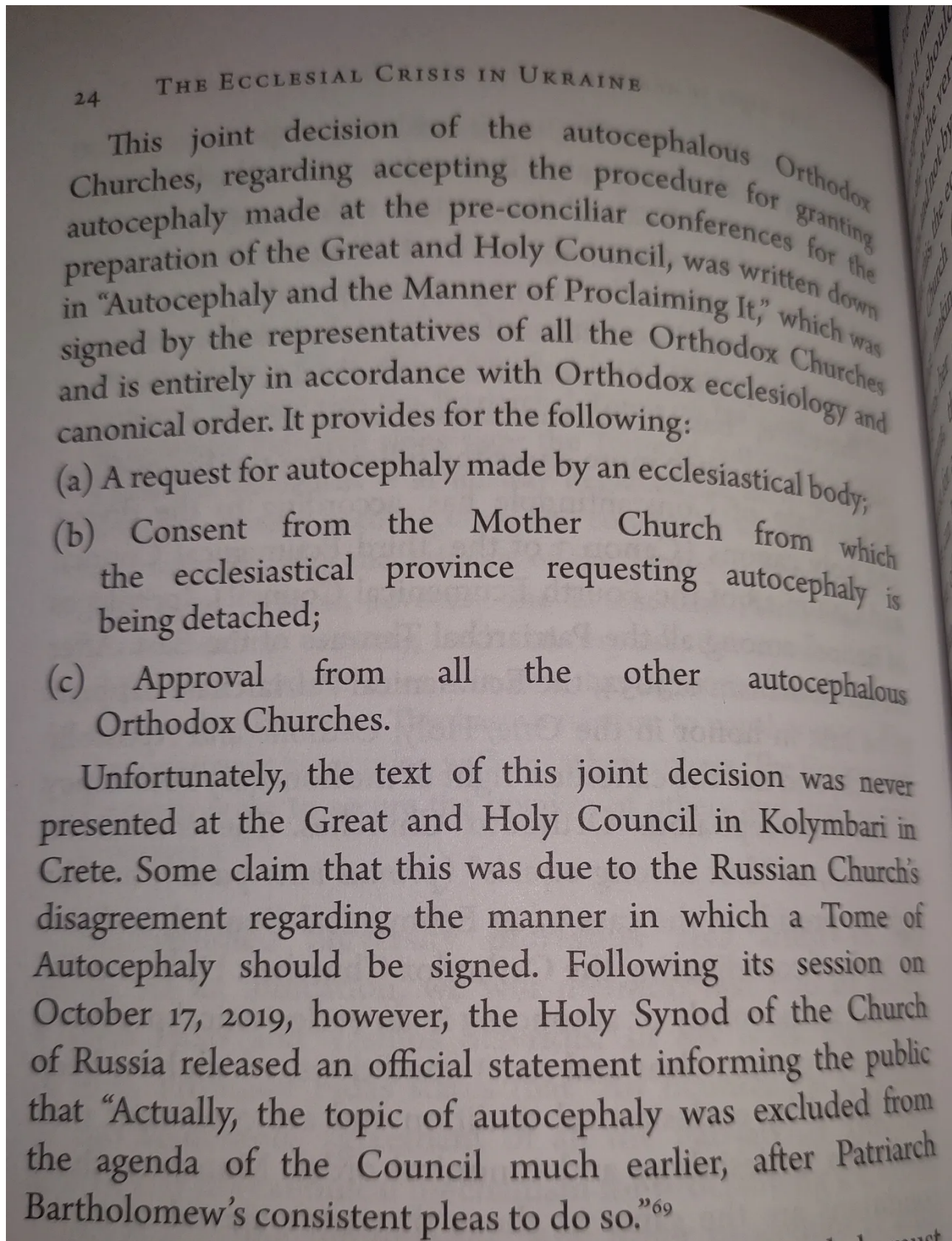
and we will urge that henceforth they have no ecclesiastical communion with those mentioned.”<sup>36</sup>

In other words, Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew recognized that the Patriarchate of Russia has not only the right to consecrate, but also the right to judge the bishops of Ukraine. That is to say, he recognizes the two fundamental rights of ecclesiastical jurisdiction: the right to ordain and the right to judge bishops. These two fundamental rights of ecclesiastical jurisdiction are also recognized by the Archbishop Ieronymos of Athens and All Greece, who later took the side of the Ecumenical Patriarchate as regards the Ukrainian Tome of Autocephaly. In his report to the Holy Synod of the Hierarchy of Greece, he noted the following: “We all know that the spread of the Gospel of salvation in Christ ‘to all the nations’ (Matthew 28:18–20) and ‘to the ends of the earth’ (Acts 1:7–8) made it necessary for the First Ecumenical Council to introduce the canonical institution of Autocephaly in all the Roman provinces of the Greco-Roman world for the synodal control of **the election, consecration and judgment of all the bishops of each province**”<sup>37</sup> (emphasis mine).

All these things, then, recommend and prove the full subordination of the Metropolis of Kiev to the canonical jurisdiction of the Patriarchate of Moscow, and, therefore, its non-dependence on the Ecumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople.

Parallel, however, to the indisputable testimony of the *Syntagmatia* and Patriarch Bartholomew’s recognition of the canonical penalties of deposal and anathematization which the Patriarchate of Moscow imposed on the former metropolitan

Metr. Nikiforos states “that none of the three basic conditions for granting autocephaly were met in the case of Ukraine:”



Church.

Thus, to be brief, we will state that none of the three basic conditions for granting autocephaly were met in the case of Ukraine, because:

- i) The granting of autocephaly was not requested by the universally acknowledged Church of Ukraine under Metropolitan Onufry, but rather by two much smaller schismatic groups.
- ii) The role of the Mother Church, in this case the Orthodox Church of Russia, was contemptuously and completely disregarded.
- iii) Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew proceeded to grant autocephaly without any contact or consultation with the primates of the other Autocephalous Orthodox Churches.

Metr. Nikiforos' conclusion outlines the major reasons why it was improper for Patriarch Bartholomew to grant autocephaly to schismatic groups that were under the jurisdiction of another Patriarch.

## Conclusions

Summarizing the ecclesiastical, theological, canonical, and historical facts we have so far discussed in regard to the Ukrainian question, we submit the following conclusions:

- i. The Ecumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople's annulment of the 1686 Patriarchal Letter and arrogation of jurisdiction over the ecclesiastical territory of Ukraine is a unilateral, one-sided, and anticanonical act, and is therefore invalid. The ecclesiastical consciousnesses of the Ecumenical Patriarchate, the Church of Russia, and all the autocephalous churches worldwide, unhesitatingly and definitively accepted the fact that for the past 332 years (1686–2018) the Orthodox Church of Ukraine was under the ecclesiastical jurisdiction of the Patriarchate of Moscow, and constituted part of Russia's canonical territory. This pan-Orthodox ecclesiastical consensus was constantly manifested at pan-Orthodox concelebrations, conferences, irenic visits, international gatherings, and many other occasions, always without any objection or reservation.
- ii. Granting of pseudo-autocephaly to schismatic groups in Ukraine without the prior knowledge and consent of the other Autocephalous Orthodox Churches, or even the Mother Church, which, in this case, is the Church of Russia, is in complete opposition to long-standing canonical

- tradition and timeless ecclesiastical practice, and cannot be canonically justified.
- iii. One cannot repeal the ecclesiastical condemnation of deposed and anathematized individuals, unless the claimants first show a sincere and profound repentance. Reestablishment into communion cannot be achieved through an anticanonical assertion that the ecumenical patriarch of Constantinople has always had the privilege of receiving and adjudicating the appeals of clergymen from all Autocephalous Orthodox Churches worldwide. This extra-territorial claim is completely contrary to the sacred canons, which it blatantly violates. For this reason, granting autocephaly to Ukraine cannot be canonically binding, nor should it be accepted by any of the other autocephalous Churches.
  - iv. Anticanonically granting pseudo-autocephaly to schismatic groups in Ukraine does not restore the Ukrainian people to the canonical fold, as the ecumenical patriarch claims, since the vast majority of the Orthodox people in Ukraine remain faithful to the canonical Church under Metropolitan Onufry of Kiev and All Ukraine. Quite to the contrary, Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew's actions resulted in the damaging and catastrophic disintegration of the Ukrainian Church, and the painful division of her Christian body. It has caused a disastrous schism which now threatens worldwide Orthodoxy.
  - v. In addition to creating a major ecclesiastical problem and threatening pan-Orthodox unity with schism,



the ecumenical patriarch's unilateral, one-sided, and anticanonical decision to grant autocephaly to schismatic Ukrainian ecclesiastical elements has irreparably damaged the pan-Orthodox prestige of the Ecumenical Patriarchate as coordinating center of the Orthodox Patriarchates and Autocephalous Churches.

- vi. When based on dogmatic infractions or violations of the divine and holy canons, suspending Eucharistic communion between two Churches is not only permissible, but also required, both by these same holy canons and by timeless ecclesiastical practice. Therefore, the Orthodox Patriarchate of Moscow, following the holy Canons (Apostolic Canons 10 and 11, Canon 5 of the First Ecumenical Council, as well as Canon 2 of the Council of Antioch), correctly proceeded to suspend Eucharistic communion with the Ecumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople. This was done in the hope that the reasons which imposed this break in communion will be removed, and relations between the two Churches will be restored "in faith and love," with the natural result being a restoration of Eucharistic communion between them.
- vii. As the Ukrainian issue progressed and developed, a new anticanonical claim came to light, namely, that in the Orthodox church, the archbishop of Constantinople and ecumenical patriarch is not "first among equals," but "first without equals." This replaces his "primacy of service" with a "primacy of authority," resulting in a violation of the principle of conciliarity which has always been practiced in the Orthodox Church.

- viii. During the dangerous and unjustified ecclesiastical crisis created in the heart of Orthodoxy by the Ukrainian issue, a new doctrine appeared, claiming that the ecumenical patriarch of Constantinople is the head of the entire Orthodox Church. Misinterpreting Apostolic Canon 34, close associates of the Ecumenical Throne argue that the ecumenical patriarch should be considered the *protos* and head of all the other primates. In other words, that all patriarchs, primates, and bishops should recognize the ecumenical patriarch as the head of the universal Orthodox Church. This novel theory has no historical, canonical, dogmatic, or ecclesiological justification, because the Orthodox Church has no head other than our Lord Jesus Christ. The only eternal Leader and immortal Head of the Church is her Creator, Saviour, and Redeemer, Christ.
- ix. In the case of Ukraine, the principle of conciliarity, which constitutes a fundamental element of the Orthodox Church's administration, was ignored, in favor of the principle of the unilateral and authoritarian power of the one, of Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew. No one can object to this fact. This is ironic, in light of historical events, as His All-Holiness presided over and coordinated the activities of the Great and Holy Council of Crete, four years ago, which proclaimed that "The Orthodox Church expresses her unity and catholicity 'in Council'. Conciliarity pervades the way she is organized, the way she makes decisions, and the path which she follows."<sup>130</sup>
- x. Finally, we would also like to point out that "the Greek-speaking Churches, on the basis of historical truth and

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canonical tradition, must, in order to avoid schism, support the historical and canonical rights of the Church of Russia, and must not support, either openly or through their silence, Constantinople's anticanonical intervention in another jurisdiction. If they support the Greek patriarch out of patriotism, nationalism, or tribalism, they fall into the heresy of ethnophyletism, which was synodically condemned by Constantinople herself in 1872."<sup>131</sup>

## The SBU Raids UOC Holy Sites (Again)

[CNN confirmed Ukraine's SBU raided several UOC Churches on December 14th, 2022:](#)

8:11 p.m. ET, December 14, 2022

### Ukraine raids more Orthodox Church premises suspected of being pro-Moscow

From CNN's Katharina Krebs and Tim Lister

The Security Service of Ukraine (SBU) said Wednesday it had carried out searches of premises belonging to a branch of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church in nine regions — finding Russian passports, propagandist literature and "passes of the occupiers."

Part of the church in Ukraine — which split earlier this year — remains loyal to the Moscow Patriarchate (MP).

"The Security Service completed counter-intelligence (security) measures at UOC (MP) facilities in Zakarpattia, Chernivtsi, Rivne, Volyn, Mykolaiv, Sumy, Lviv, Zhytomyr and Kherson regions," the SBU said.

It said it found Russian passports, St. George's ribbons — which are popular among pro-Russian separatists — symbols of the banned pro-Russian party "Opposition Platform For Life" and "manuals for spreading enemy propaganda through the faithful" on the territory of the dioceses.

In addition, intelligence officers found books by Ivan Ilyin, who is often called "Putin's philosopher," it said.

In the village of Chornobaivka **in Kherson region**, the SBU said it had discovered passes of the pro-Russian occupiers during the inspection of the church premises.

It said photographs of Russian documents "on ensuring cooperation with the military commissariats of the Russian Federation" were found in the diocese of **the Lviv region**.

The SBU also said it had found a monk with a Russian passport and contacts in the Russian Federation on the territory of one of the monasteries of **the Rivne region** in western Ukraine.

"His possible involvement in intelligence and subversive activities for the benefit of the Russian special services is currently being investigated," it said.

[Interfax reported](#) that the canonical Ukrainian Orthodox Church “received over 70 orders banning its activity from the Ukrainian authorities.”

The screenshot shows the Interfax Religion website. The main headline is "Ukrainian Orthodox Church receives over 70 orders banning its activity from Ukrainian local authorities in recent months". The article is dated 15 December 2022, 16:06. The text of the article states: "Moscow, December 15, Interfax - The Ukrainian Orthodox Church has received over 70 orders banning its activity from the Ukrainian local authorities, head of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church's legal affairs department Archpriest Alexander Bakhov said. 'These are illegal orders. They contravene the Constitution and Ukrainian legislation on martial law. The local authorities have no jurisdiction to ban religious organizations,' the priest said at a press conference in Kiev on Thursday. He recommended that clerics contact the police in every case of this type, as Article 19 of the Constitution allows an official to operate only within the limits of law. 'The goal of such bans is to create an information field alleging that the public demands a ban on the Ukrainian Orthodox Church. This is not true,' the priest said." There is a "Print this page" link and a "Home" link with a right-pointing arrow.

The SBU conducted searches at UOC Churches and properties in nine regions of Ukraine on/around December 14, 2022 (Zakarpattia, Chernivtsi, Rivne, Volyn, Mykolaiv, Sumy, Lviv, Zhytomyr, and Kherson regions):

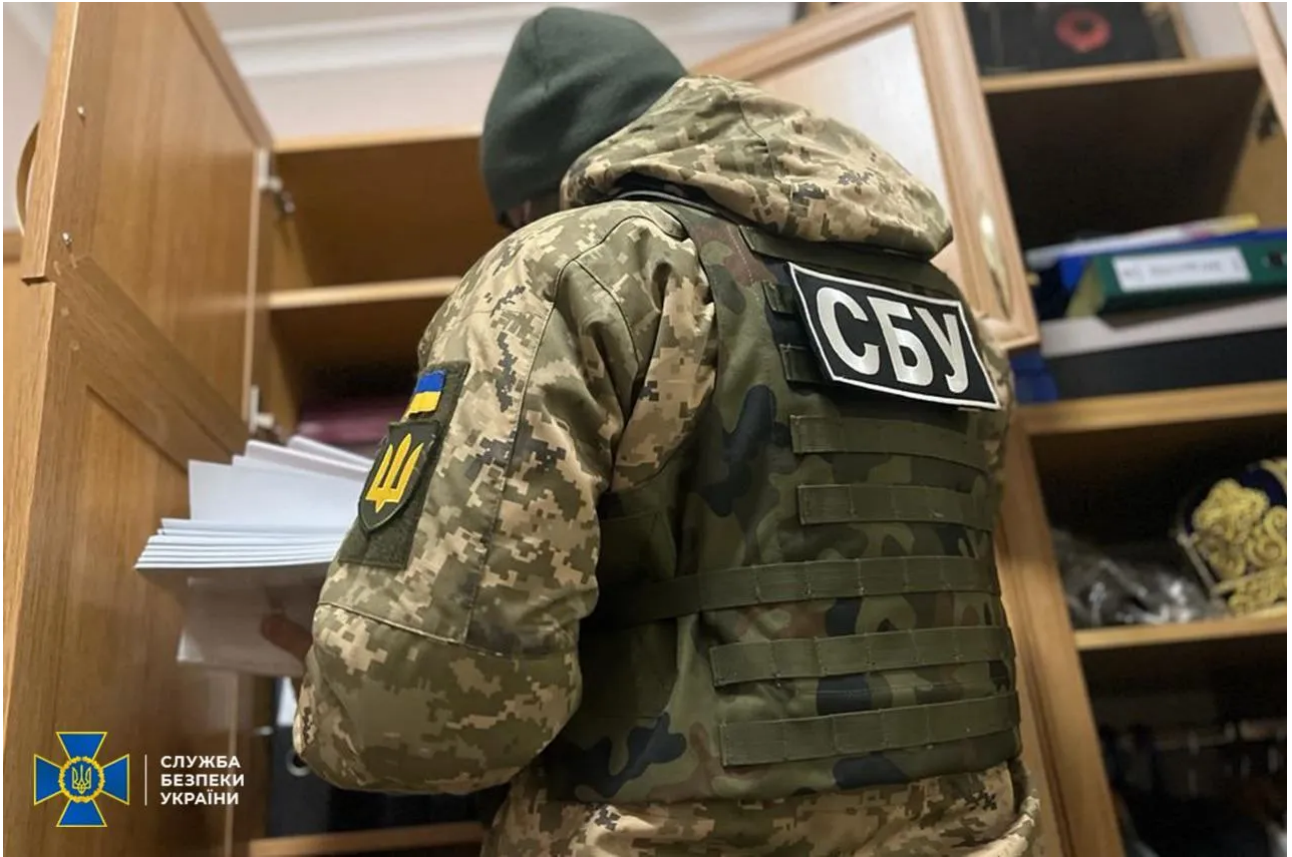






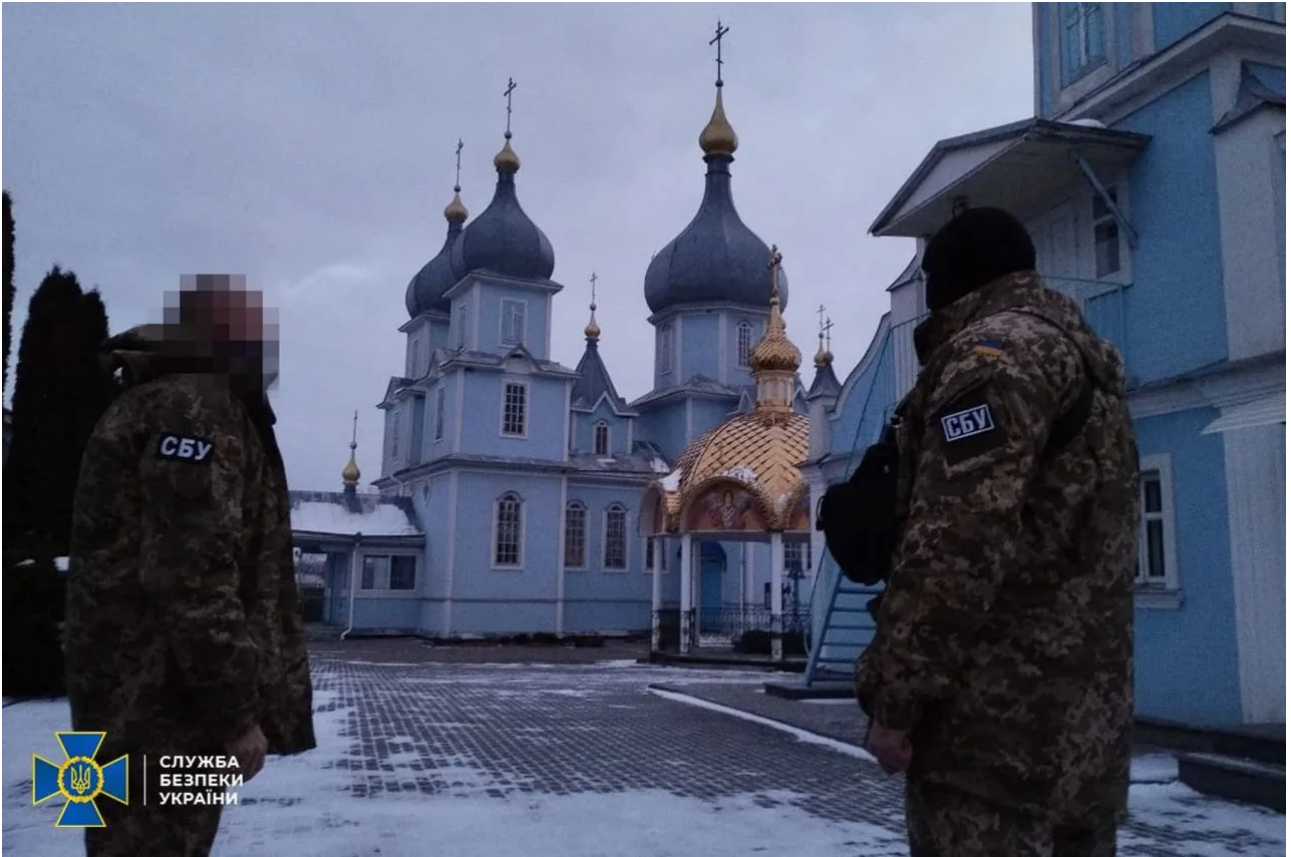












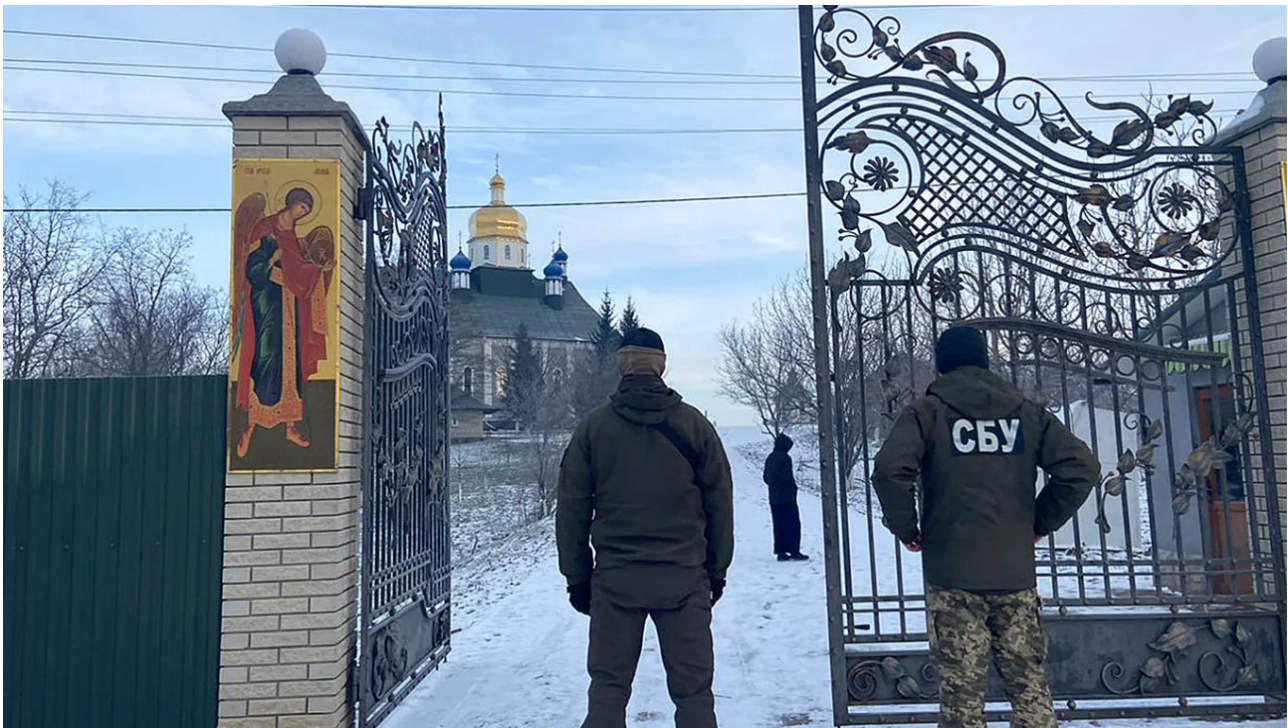


# Ukraine Finds 'Propaganda' at Russia-Linked Orthodox Sites

By **AFP**  
Updated: 21 hours ago



<https://www.themoscowtimes.com/2022/12/14/ukraine-finds-propaganda-at-russia-linked-orthodox-sites-a79697>



Ukraine's SBU security service on Wednesday found "propaganda literature" in counter-intelligence searches in churches and monasteries across the country, in its most recent descent on religious sites of the Russia-linked Ukrainian Orthodox Church.

"The Security Service of Ukraine found Russian passports, propaganda literature and laissez-passer" issued by Russian occupation authorities during searches on Wednesday, the agency said in a statement.

The SBU earlier announced "counter-intelligence measures" in more than a dozen religious sites in several Ukrainian regions, including the western Lviv region, Kherson region in the south and Zhytomyr region in the northwest.

"In the publications, representatives of the Russian Federation deny the existence of the Ukrainian people, their language and culture, and question Ukrainian statehood," the SBU said.

<https://www.themoscowtimes.com/2022/12/14/ukraine-finds-propaganda-at-russia-linked-orthodox-sites-a79697>

Photos of [the SBU raid of the Lavra Caves Monastery on November 22, 2022](#):



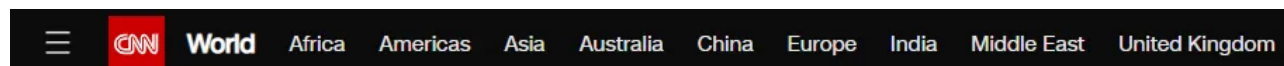






## Ukraine Military Strikes Church and Civilian Targets in Donetsk

[According to the mayor of Donetsk](#), The Armed Forces of Ukraine carried out the “most massive strike’ on the occupied Donetsk region since 2014.”



## Ukraine launches ‘most massive strike’ on occupied Donetsk region since 2014, Russia-installed mayor says

By Olga Voitovych, Anna Chernova, Zahid Mahmood, Josh Pennington and Sana Noor Haq, CNN

Published 11:51 AM EST, Thu December 15, 2022

<https://www.cnn.com/2022/12/15/europe/russia-ukraine-donetsk-kherson-strikes-intl/index.html>

**(CNN)** — Ukrainian forces have unleashed the biggest attack on the occupied Donetsk region since 2014, according to a Russia-installed official, in the wake of heavy fighting in the east of the country.

Donetsk has been held by Russian-backed separatists for eight years and it is one of four Ukrainian regions that Moscow attempted to annex in October, in violation of international law.

“At exactly 7 a.m. the (Ukrainians) subjected the center of Donetsk (city) to the most massive strike since 2014,” the Moscow-appointed mayor, Aleksey Kulemzin, posted on Telegram.

“Forty rockets from BM-21 ‘Grad’ MLRS were fired at civilians in our city,” he said Thursday, adding that a key intersection in Donetsk city center had come under fire.

Kulemzin shared photographs on Telegram of damage to residential and commercial buildings and a cathedral.

There have been no immediate reports of casualties, according to Russian state media.

CNN cannot independently confirm Kulemzin’s claims.



<https://www.cnn.com/2022/12/15/europe/russia-ukraine-donetsk-kherson-strikes-intl/index.html>



<https://www.cnn.com/2022/12/15/europe/russia-ukraine-donetsk-kherson-strikes-intl/index.html>

Video of damage to the Svyato Peobtazhensky Cathedral in Donetsk:

### Armed Forces of Ukraine Shells Svyato Peobtazhensky Cathedral in D...



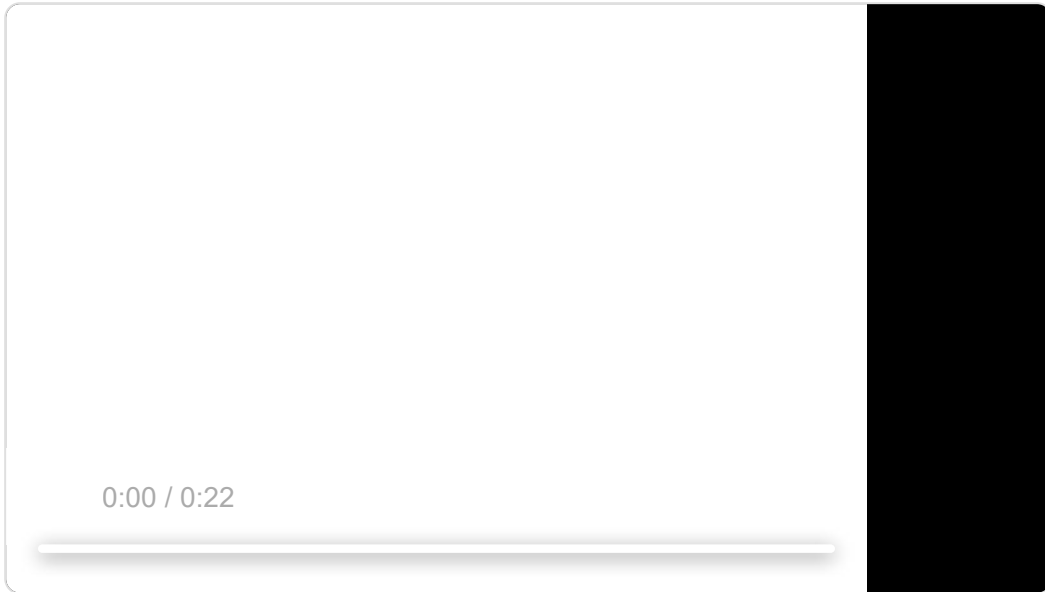
Video of damage from Armed Forces of Ukraine strikes targeting residential and civilian buildings and neighborhoods:

### Armed Forces of Ukraine Shells Civilian Buildings in Donetsk (Dec. 14/15



Live Not by Lies  
@Dana35300026

Ukrainian TV guests promote harassment of and attacks against the canonical Ukrainian Orthodox Church.



2:21 PM · Dec 15, 2022

13 Likes 10 Retweets

Met. Luke, who references the above video in the following post:

Christ is in our midst, my dear readers!

About the invaluable benefits of the performance of court jesters.

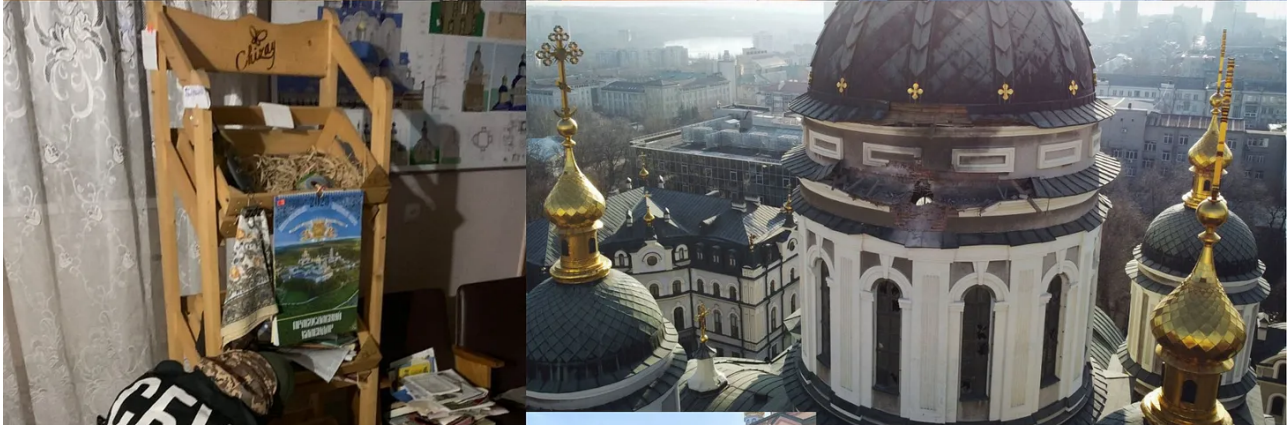
One of the priests, after the vile performance of the clowns, wrote: "I am a priest of the UOC. Dear artists, I offer you to spit in my face for free, hit me on the left and right cheeks, repeat all the mats you said, only on one condition. Do it near my child's hospital bed. Do not be afraid, my son will not punish you, he was torn apart by an explosion in the war.

I have no doubt that Zhenya and Sasha would gladly agree to this, the only question is how much they will ask for this as a fee from their boss, and how many likes they will receive for it. And so, judging by the expression on their faces, which have grown several times in a short time, these guys are ready for anything. But there are undoubted benefits in their appearance on television.

At school, in chemistry lessons, we were shown how to separate salt from sand. To do this, it was necessary to carry out a simple work of two steps. How to separate people who have the salt of faith, which does not allow them to rot from the inside, from those whose souls are rotten and stink of all kinds of impurities? It's pretty easy. You need to take a couple of such artists and ask them to open their mouths to extract stinking ones from there, the so-called. jokes. And then everything is simple. Those who begin to feel sick from such "humor" have salt, and those who like it have already lost all spiritual immunity due to the kinship of their souls with the souls of these so-called. jesters.

I know people who are far from the Church and even

I know people who are far from the Church and even from faith in Christ, who vomited from this speech



Ukrainian democracy. While the SBU is looking for traces of "anti-state activity" in children's Bibles and reprint publications from two hundred years ago, while they somehow "miraculously" find "DPR"

flags among the underwear of eighty-year-old nuns who had no idea that there were such symbols, titushki with TV screens spit in the souls of millions of Ukrainians with impunity and without any shame inflame religious hatred without fear of any consequences, and the relevant authorities in the pose of an ostrich pretend that everything is within the frame of the law. Therefore, the conviction of Eugene and Alexander and all their relatives!

### Comments



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