



Faithful of Ukrainian Orthodox Church appeal to President of Ukraine and Local Orthodox Churches for support



On February 22, 2021, representatives of captured churches of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church held a convention at the Kiev-Pecherskaya Lavra of the Holy Dormition. After the convention, the clergy and faithful of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church recorded a video-appeal to the President of Ukraine asking him to protect their rights and appealed to Local Orthodox Churches for prayer and support.

The rector of the church of Great Martyr George the Conqueror at the Katerinovka village, Ternopol Region, Father Sergiy Gladun spoke about the brutal capture of his church, 'People were beaten up and robbed in their own state. It is something unprecedented in the 21 st century – we are hated for the Orthodox faith; our churches are captured; church door are broken down; our shrines are taken away'. He said that since 2014 there had been over 100 such cases (over 130 - ed.).

'Standing next to me are people from 12 regions of Ukraine and each of them has a history of pain and grief and their victims for the Orthodox faith. There are thousands of people like us', the priest testified.

Father Sergiy underscored that the anti-church policy was supported by the former Ukrainian President P. Poroshenko, and most of the faithful Ukrainians hoped that the new president they had voted for would stop the oppression carried out by the previous authorities on religious grounds and would protect the rights of millions of Orthodox Ukrainians.

'It has not happened though so far' he stated.

Representatives of other religious communities, who also suffered from the 'OCU' raiding, spoke of their hopes, "We expect that you will protect the constitutional rights of each Ukrainian and Greek, Russian and Hungarian, that you will not divide the Ukrainians into 'right' and 'wrong', as you said".

The faithful appealed to the guarantor of the Constitution 'to stop the discrimination of citizens of Ukraine and the Ukrainian Orthodox Church and to repeal the law on the change of her name. 'Dear Vladimir Alexandrovich, you can change it all, return respect for the Ukrainian Constitution, return peace to Ukraine and show that human rights are above all', their appeal reads.

The representatives of the captured churches of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church made their appeal to Local Churches in several languages - Romanian, Bulgarian, Greek, Georgian and Serbian. 'We ask for support and prayers of Local Orthodox Churches in our struggle with those who hate their neighbors, who capture our churches, who lift their hand against the faithful, priests and what is sacred!' the faithful emphasized asking 'not to support the realization of the Ukrainian schism'.

'We, the Ukrainian Orthodox Church, are in our own home. It is our Church and our land', the Orthodox Ukrainians stated and concluded their appeal with these words: 'Christ is Risen!' in several languages.

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