



Archpastoral Letter of Council of Bishops of the UOC of the USA and Diaspora
Архіпастирське Звернення Собору Єпископів УПЦ США та Діаспори

90th Anniversary of HOLODOMOR: *The Truth Must Not Be Silenced*

90-ТИ ЛІТТЯ ГОЛОДОМОРУ: *Правда Неповинна Бути Замовченою*

*"The path of the righteous is as the dawning light that shines brighter
and brighter unto the perfect day."*

Proverbs 4:18

The 90th Anniversary of the Ukrainian HOLODOMOR – Genocide by Starvation - is before us and our souls resound with a powerful call for justice and truth that will not be silenced.

Each and single day of 2022-2023 must be a day of remembrance and devotion for our people, a spiritual journey to the memorials of our martyrs in Ukraine, the United States of America (especially in Washington, DC and at the Spiritual Center of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the USA in South Bound Brook, NJ) and throughout the world, before which we humbly kneel in prayer with offerings of incense for the souls of our innocent victims, millions of whom lie in unmarked graves, having suffered horrible death by starvation. Indeed, “the path of the righteous is as the dawning light that shines brighter and brighter unto the perfect day.”

In 1932-1933, and for years before and after, Soviet Russian Government committed Genocide against the Ukrainian people. In Eastern and Central Ukraine up to 10 million sons and daughters of our nation were subjected to slaughter, famine and disease, left to die on the streets of cities, towns and villages, deported and forced to march to their deaths. The way of life and honest accomplishments and creativity along with thousands of monasteries and churches were desecrated and swiftly destroyed. National institutions and schools were razed and ruined. Our spiritual and cultural treasures were uprooted and obliterated.

Ninety years ago - when fragments of the Ukrainian nation, having lost generations of citizens, were scattered throughout the world, and Ukraine, under Soviet oppression, was waging a life-and-death struggle for survival – it was difficult to believe in a future for Ukrainian people. Nevertheless, a new dawn came. By the Grace of God, our people rose from death. The people, guided by their ancient history and spiritual treasury and traditions, rose like the proverbial phoenix from the ashes, regenerated their country out of the ruins and built a “homeland of light and hope,” of science, education and culture, as a true European nation. Ukrainians throughout the world built homes churches and community centers, flourishing in countries near and far, carrying on their traditions and spiritual life. Wherever the children of our nation lived, they achieved success, earned respect and trust, gaining recognition for their conscientious work and contributions to all aspects of human life. This is the history of our people throughout centuries – one of repeated adversity and resurrection.

Today, besieged by yet another genocide, the citizens of our ancestral homeland Ukraine once again defend themselves against the evil regime of death in the Russian Federation. Thus, the memory of the genocidal

HOLODOMOR against the Ukrainian people becomes more profound as Russia again murders men, women and children, steals grain, blocks Ukrainian ports and destroys critical infrastructure resulting in starvation, suffering and horror for not only Ukraine but nations throughout the world who depend solely on receiving Ukrainian wheat to feed their citizens – because Ukraine grows and exports a 25% of the world’s annual wheat needs and supply.

Glory to you, O Lord, “Like a shield you protect us with your good favor.” (Psalms 5:12). By placing our hope in You, O Lord, our people were enlightened and strengthened. Your light kindled the ingenuity of our spirit. Your Might propelled us to our victories. We created, even though others attempt to destroy our creations. We continued to live, even though others want us dead. You, O Lord, willed that our people – condemned to death by a genocidal plan - should live on.

As it was 90 years ago, so it is today – the blood of our innocent martyrs and the suffering of our people cry out for justice. Our destroyed churches, community centers and homes, the violation of our national rights and the usurpation and distortion of our history all cry out for justice. Having survived genocidal HOLODOMOR, we continue to believe that all the nations of the world – beginning with the United Nations – will finally join those righteous nations that have declared the HOLODOMOR to be an act of genocide, rather than a “national tragedy” as proclaimed by the United Nations in 2003. What further proof is needed beyond the devastation in Ukraine today?

In memory of millions of martyrs from HOLODOMOR, we express our gratitude to those nations, organizations and individuals who have had the courage and conviction to recognize and condemn the HOLODOMOR as genocide. The world sat by in silence as the HOLODOMOR of 1932-33 ravaged Ukraine. Today, the world stands up for Ukraine with incredible unity and conviction. We express gratitude to those nations and individuals that have accepted the citizens of Ukraine as brothers and sisters during the present genocide, providing the necessities of life in many, many ways. These examples of justice shall be luminous pages in the history of mankind. They will be remembered and appreciated unto eternity.

O, God-Loving people of Ukraine, graced from on high - a nation tortured - a nation resurrected - live peacefully and with an unwavering heart, keep your faith and hope alive. The Lord’s encouragement and message are addressed to you: “Though you are not mighty, you were faithful to my word, and you did not betray my name... Hold fast what you have so that no one will take away your crown of victory.” (Revelations 3:8-11). Thus, let us stay on course before God, righteous and true, on the steadfast path of faith, which like the morning light dispels the darkness and makes the horizons of hope visible. Our way is with God; and the life of faith is our victory. Let us transform the remembrance of our HOLODOMOR victims into strength in our spiritual and national life. Before God and all mankind, may their memory illuminate our path to righteousness and guide our way toward the realization of our sacred aspirations and justice for the world.

From our Church’s cherished spiritual center in South Bound Brook, NJ, the sight of the first Memorial constructed in the world (1965) for the HOLODOMOR victims – ST. ANDREW MEMORIAL CHURCH – let us pray fervently to God for peace, safety and the welfare of our beloved Ukraine and her people – our people. May Love, Justice and Truth reign over all humanity, and may the ways of the righteous radiate, guide and spread the Light of Christ until the dawn of a new day brings peace and happiness to all the world.

+ ANTONY, Metropolitan

+ DANIEL, Archbishop

+ JEREMIAH, Archbishop

