



STATEMENT OF THE COUNCIL OF BISHOPS
OF THE UKRAINIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH OF THE USA AND DIASPORA
ON THE OCCASION OF THE
33RD ANNIVERSARY OF UKRAINE'S INDEPENDENCE

Beloved Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

As we gather in solemn reflection and prayer on the 33rd anniversary of Ukraine's independence, we, the Council of Bishops of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the USA and Diaspora, extend our heartfelt greetings and spiritual blessings to all faithful sons and daughters of our Holy Church, both in Ukraine and throughout the world. Today, as we commemorate this sacred milestone in the life of our beloved ancestral motherland, our hearts are heavy with the weight of the ongoing trials and tribulations faced by the nation of Ukraine, yet they are also filled with unwavering hope and faith in God's divine mercy and protection.

In these turbulent times, when the shadow of destruction, slaughter, and crimes against humanity looms large over our Ukrainian people, we are reminded of the sacred duty we bear to uphold the sanctity of life and the dignity of every human soul. Ukraine, a nation that has withstood genocides, forced resettlements, and the agony of exile, must be able to raise her children in peace, according to the time-honored Christian traditions that have shaped her identity for over 1,036 years. The morality and traditional family values that form the bedrock of our faith are not mere relics of the past; they are living truths that continue to guide and sustain us in the face of overwhelming adversity.

The struggle we witness today in Ukraine is not merely a political reality; it is a spiritual battle for the very soul of our nation. The forces of evil, manifested in the aggression and terror unleashed by the Russian state, seek not only to conquer land but to destroy the spirit and identity of a people who have remained resolute in their faith in God. We see the pain and suffering of the most vulnerable - the children of Ukraine, their mothers and fathers, and all who have been touched by the horrors of war. Yet, even in the darkest hours, the light of Christ shines brightly in their hearts, illuminating a path of hope, resilience, and unwavering trust in divine providence.

We call upon the worldwide community to stand in solidarity with Ukraine, recognizing that this is a fight not only for the sovereignty of a nation but for the protection of the sacred values that bind us all as children of God. The respect for human life and its sanctity must be preserved at all costs, for to do otherwise would be to betray the legacy of our ancestors, who invested their lives in the development of our land and the preservation of our sacred traditions. By honoring the sovereignty of Ukraine's borders and state, we honor the sacrifices of those who came before us and ensure that their legacy will endure for generations to come.

We cannot speak of Ukraine's independence without acknowledging the tremendous sacrifices made by the men and women of Ukraine's armed forces. These brave souls have taken up arms to defend not only the freedom of their homeland but the principles of liberty and justice that underpin the civilized world. Their courage in the face of unimaginable danger is a beacon of hope for all who cherish freedom. They stand as guardians of peace and security, not just for Ukraine, but for the entire global community, as they confront the terrorism and tyranny of the Russian state.

We also recognize the countless refugees from Ukraine who have found temporary homes in nations across the Diaspora. These individuals, like lit candles in the darkness, continue to shed the light of truth and remain steadfast in their resolve for a victorious Ukraine. Their resilience and determination are a testament to the indomitable spirit of the Ukrainian people, and their presence among us serves as a constant reminder of the bonds of brotherhood that unite us as one Orthodox family, regardless of where we may be in the world.

To the volunteers who tirelessly work to offer logistical and humanitarian support to Ukraine during this time of genocidal aggression, we extend our deepest gratitude. Your selfless service is a living embodiment of Christ's commandment to love one another as He has loved us. You are the hands and feet of Christ in a world desperately in need of His healing touch, and your efforts are a powerful testament to the strength of our shared humanity.

We ask all faithful Christians to join us in fervent prayer for Ukraine. Let us lift our voices to the Lord, beseeching Him to grant peace and protection to our ancestral homeland. We stand in solidarity with the Hierarchs and clergy of the Orthodox Church of Ukraine, who continue to offer spiritual support to the nation in these trying times. The Church is the soul of the nation; our faith is our heartbeat. We, as Orthodox brethren in the Diaspora, breathe in unison with the people of Ukraine, united in our prayers, our hopes, and our unwavering commitment to a free and peaceful Ukraine.

As the Hierarchs of Ukrainian Orthodox communities in the USA, Brazil, Australia, New Zealand, Germany, Belgium, France, Paraguay, and Argentina, we offer our deepest support and prayers for the people of Ukraine and for all those who stand with her in this time of trial. May the Most Holy Birth-Giver of God continue to protect Ukraine with her heavenly intercession, and may the light of Christ guide our steps toward a future of peace, justice, and freedom.

In Christ's love and service,

+ Antony

Metropolitan of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the USA and Diaspora

+ Jeremiah

Archbishop of the Ukrainian Orthodox Eparchy of South America

+ Daniel

Archbishop of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the USA and Diaspora

