



Statement of the
Council of Bishops of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the USA and Diaspora at the
**CELEBRATION OF 31ST
ANNIVERSARY OF UKRAINE'S INDEPENDENCE**
24 August, 2022

Beloved in the Lord, brothers and sisters – the faithful of our Holy Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the USA and Diaspora as well as all people of good will: we cordially congratulate all Ukrainian-Americans, all citizens of Ukraine, the friends and supporters of our ancestral homeland country on this August 24, 2022 - the 31st anniversary of Independence of Ukraine - one of the most important dates defining our identity!

May God bless Ukraine with peace!

From the very beginning, we would like to particularly congratulate the young men and women who fearlessly serve the people and nation of Ukraine during the time of historic aggression of Russian Federation against Ukraine.

Ukraine – is a spot on the map of our planet - where the world is facing a true challenge to peace and where we are able to prove that we all together, all of Ukraine, together with the civilized world, fight for the world's security and independence.

The price that our ancestral homeland Ukraine has paid for independence and freedom is immense and obliges each of us to never forget our heroes, who sacrificed their lives. We prayerfully commit the souls of our warriors fallen for freedom, independence and integrity of the homeland into the loving embrace of the Savior, crucified on the cross by the sins of humanity.

The historical restoration of our statehood took the vast efforts of many generations and the maintenance of the achieved statehood also requires hard work and devotion. We all need to further enhance the values of our Ukrainian heritage and to undertake the peaceful, consistent and result-oriented policy to address the challenges and ensure the irreversible spiritual, economic and political development of the country, which generations of our people desire and pray for.

It obliges us all – the society, Church and civil government and the entire Diaspora, all envisioning Ukraine in Europe to jointly keep striving to achieve the goal that unites us – to become the full-fledged member of a democratic and freedom-loving world.

As hierarchs of the Church, we believe that everyone will demonstrate wisdom and put the peace-loving national interest above all. We call upon the leaders of Russian Federation, both spiritual and political to immediately cease the hostilities and war actions against Ukraine. De-occupation is of particular importance not only for Ukraine but for the peace and stability of the world.

We call upon the people of Ukraine – all within her borders and all who for decades or just days live beyond those borders – to remain strong in their faith. Call to mind how even after the most incomprehensible and genocidal afflictions – like the Holodomor – Ukraine has risen from the ashes like the mythological Phoenix and became stronger and more determined to follow the road to a self-sustaining independence. Now is the time to fall down on our knees to seek God’s further protection and guidance.

Beloved in the Lord, let’s all take every possible step to make Ukraine a stable, peaceful, and successful country. It is what our children expect of us – peace and constant dependence on God this is the potential they see in Ukraine in the 21st century.

Today, we would like to thank everyone again who believes in Ukraine and who stands by our side on this path. We are overwhelmed by so many individuals and organizations throughout the world – ordinary citizens of many countries, church congregations of all faiths, in particular, who have offered almost unbelievable sums of money, medical devices, medicines, ambulances and so much more to aide our brothers and sisters so horribly attacked and once again oppressed. They have provided a lifeline for the people of Ukraine during this military aggression.

Embracing the Divine-given gift of freedom with awe and thanksgiving with you our spiritual children here in the United States of America and Diapsora, and with those in Ukraine, we beseech the Father of lights and every perfect gift, the Son of righteousness and the Spirit of truth to descend upon us, embrace us, guiding and perfecting our every deed. “The Father is our Hope, the Son is our Refuge and the Holy Spirit is our Protection” throughout all our existence.

+Antony, Metropolitan

+Daniel, Archbishop

