



**Епархія Чикагская и Средне-Американская
Русская Православная Церковь Заграницей**

**Diocese of Chicago & Mid-America
Russian Orthodox Church Abroad**

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Martyrs Eutropius, Cleonicus, Basiliscus

Diocese of Chicago and Mid-America
Statement on the Continuing War in Ukraine

With the war in Ukraine continuing, we must raise our voice once again for the good of the souls of those entrusted to our spiritual care.

In war civilians should be protected to the greatest extent possible. According to the media, this war is being conducted immorally by only one side. This is never the case. We call both sides to cease military actions immediately.

Our priests report that they are hearing discussions to stop commemorating Patriarch Kyrill. In essence, this is schism, a sin that St. John Chrysostom says is not washed away even by the blood of martyrdom.

Patriarch Kyrill is in a very difficult and delicate situation, since his flock is on both sides of the war. He has called all parties during Great Lent to increase their prayers for peace.

Metropolitan Onuphry has stated that the evil of war is the rendering of the unity of the people, and the institution of hatred where there should be Christian Love. May his words ring in the ears of all who make decisions in this war.

We support the Metropolitan unconditionally.

We also hear from our priests that it has become difficult to keep the faithful united.

The Church from its inception has valued only truth above unity, and we must, as Orthodox Christians, strive with increased zeal during times of strife (be that war, pandemic, politics, or any divisive societal occurrence), to remain united. We must refocus ourselves on drawing nearer to God, cementing the unity within our parish communities.

A parish is a worshipping Eucharistic community: the people and the clergy united around the Holy Altar, partaking of the one Eucharist, drawing nearer to each other as a parish family and, thus, drawing nearer to God.

It is understandable that the faithful, being influenced by the society in which they live, and seeing that their hierarchs do not necessarily respond in a way that the society and media instruct, are confused. We understand this, but call upon all to renew their prayers that we, your hierarchs, would make the best decisions possible for the salvation and good of all.

We must be very clear: this is not a question of Russian nationality vs. Ukrainian nationality. There is no discrimination of peoples with God. In His eyes there is no favored nation. All are equal.

The Russian Orthodox Church Outside Russia (ROCOR) is an autonomous (self-governing) part of the Russian Church, and we serve the needs of all Orthodox peoples throughout the world who come to us. The Church is on the side of neither Russia nor Ukraine, the Church is on the side of God.

We call upon all to hearken unto the words of the Great Litany, intoned at the beginning of each Divine Liturgy: “For the peace of the whole world, for the good estate of the Holy Churches of God, and for the union of all, let us pray to the Lord!”

In Christ,

+ Archbishop Peter

Peter, Archbishop of Chicago & Mid-America

