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The Ecumenical Patriarch conducts memorial service for the victims of the ongoing war in Ukraine



His All-Holiness Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew addressed the international community appealing them not to ignore the ongoing bloodshed in Ukraine, after the Divine Liturgy, at which he officiated, on the Sunday of the Publican and Pharisee, on 25 February 2024, at the Church of Saint Nicholas in Tzivali. At the conclusion of the Divine Liturgy a Memorial Service was held for the Ukrainians who lost their lives defending the independence and territorial integrity of their homeland, on the occasion of the completion of two years since the large-scale Russian invasion of the country and ten years since the events of 2014.

“Ten years ago, the world witnessed the bravery and sacrifice of the ‘Heavenly Hundred’ Heroes and the determined spirit of the Revolution of Dignity. Meanwhile, two years have already passed since the Kremlin’s all-out invasion of Ukraine, in a conflict that seems to have no end in sight. The wounds left by this unwarranted act are still fresh and the pain is still palpable. So we gather today to commemorate those lost and to reflect on the profound impact of their courage and resilience.

In Independence Square in Kyiv and across Ukraine, ordinary men and women rose up in defiance of corruption, abuse of power and oppression. They stood together in a peaceful protest, united by a common vision for freedom, justice and European integration. Despite facing unimaginable hardship and violence from the authorities who were supposed to protect them, they refused to back down, demonstrating the power of unity and the strength of the human spirit. Together with each other, with a common goal, citizens were able to make a tangible change for the betterment of their country.”



His All-Holiness, speaking in English, pointed out that those who lost their lives in the events of 2014 are not only martyrs for their country, but are symbols of hope and inspiration for people around the world. "Their sacrifice serves as a reminder that even in the darkest moments, the flame of freedom cannot be extinguished," he stressed.

At another point in his address His All-Holiness underlined that "the invasion of the Russian forces in Ukraine is a strong example of the kind of injustice and subjugation which the Church must condemn. It cannot be justified or vindicated. It is an attack on the dignity and sovereignty of a people who have long struggled for self-determination and have long suffered under the yoke of tyranny. It violates the fundamental principles of justice and peace that are at the centre of our faith."

The Ecumenical Patriarch urged the Ukrainian people to remain united and not lose hope, because it is the only way to achieve their goal and for the sacrifice of those who lost their lives in battle to not be in vain. He expressed the belief that the Ukrainian people will emerge victorious from this war.

"As people of faith, we are called to stand up for what is right and speak out against oppression and totalitarianism wherever they occur. The Russian invasion of Ukraine is a stark reminder of the enduring presence of evil and hatred in our world and the urgent need for all people of good will to unite against injustice." said His All- Holiness and reiterated that the Great and Holy Church of Christ stands with the members of the Ukrainian Community of Constantinople, but also with all Ukrainians in every corner of the planet as they continue their struggle for a better future.



“Let us work tirelessly for the much-needed reconciliation and a just peace, knowing that God is with us in all our struggles. May the memory of all those who gave their lives for the freedom of Ukraine be eternal and may their sacrifice inspire us to build a world where peace, justice, mercy and love will prevail.”

The Consul General of Ukraine in Constantinople, Mr. Roman Nedilskyi, made a short speech.

Also present for the Divine Liturgy and Memorial Service were, Their Eminences, Metropolitan Gregorios of Peristeri and Metropolitan Iakovos of Mexico, His Grace Bishop Adrianos of Halicarnassus, Supervisor of the Phanar – Golden Horn District, the Mayor of the Municipality of Peristeri in Attica, Mr. Andreas Pahatouridis, with his family and associates, the Vice-Chancellor of the University of Athens, Mr. Christos Karagiannis, the Dean of the Theological School of Athens, Professor Mr. Emmanuel Karageorgoudis, members of the Ukrainian Community, as well as faithful from Constantinople and pilgrims from abroad.

On the previous day, Saturday, in the afternoon, His All-Holiness officiated at the Vespers of the Sunday of the Publican and the Pharisee (beginning of the Triodion) which took place at the venerable Patriarchal Church of Saint George, Phanar.





























Photographs: Nikos Papachristou

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