

Met. Anthony: Great Cross Procession lit up hope in millions of hearts



The Great Cross Procession shows that the UOC has gone with dignity through difficult trials, people united, the Church continues to grow and develop.

On July 30, 2019, the UOC Chancellor, Metropolitan Anthony of Borispil and Brovary, spoke about the main conclusions of the Great Cross Procession, which took place in Kiev on the occasion of the 1031st anniversary of the Christianization of Rus', reports ["Vesti"](#).

Bishop Anthony recalled that on July 27, 2019, the Cross Procession of the believers of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church was held in Kiev: "It gathered about 300 thousand pilgrims from all regions of our country. Even small children marched in the procession, many of whom sang church hymns along with adults and prayed for peace in our Homeland."

"It was gratifying to see joy and peace on people's faces. Recent years have not given us enough reasons for this mood. However, now the hope that the situation

will change and politics will no longer interfere in the life of the Church has been lit up in millions of hearts,” the bishop added.

Metropolitan Anthony asks the question: what did this procession show all of us? “Firstly, the fact that our Church has gone with dignity through difficult trials. People united around their shepherds, their faith became even more ardent and conscious. Every year our Cross Procession becomes more and more large-scale. And this speaks only about one thing – thank God, we are standing firmly on our feet, and our Church continues to grow and develop.

Secondly, the impressive scale of the prayer procession demonstrates that our believers are ready to explicitly and actively support their Church. Even we, bishops, did not expect so many people. In addition to buses, many travelled to the capital by private transport, by suburban rails and trains, by air. In particular, we were very pleased to see groups of pilgrims from other countries who consider our religious procession to be not only an intra-Ukrainian but also a pan-Orthodox event.

Thirdly, even in a period of universal joy, our believers do not forget about their brothers and sisters, who have been persecuted and harassed. So, during the procession, the cross walkers left the column and put up stands near the Verkhovna Rada with photographs of the communities of our Church expelled from their churches. This is a real pain for all of us. After all, under the hammer of raider seizures fall the fates of ordinary people, who are forced with threats, humiliations and beatings to renounce the faith of their forefathers,” he explained.

However, he said, the trials only strengthened the spirit of believers: “Communities – even after being expelled from the temples – continue to be faithful to Christ and His Church. And even the so-called black registrars, employees of regional state administrations who, on the basis of fake documents, write down our believers as ‘believers of the Church Orthodox Church’, can’t do anything about it.

So, it turns out that on paper people are no longer in our Church, but in reality – the opposite is true. Agree that this situation is abnormal, and you need to do something with it.”

This leads us to one more conclusion, the hierarch notes: “Not only believers but also citizens of their country are walking in the human sea of the Cross Procession. They work, serve, pay taxes, engage in social activities, work in various fields for the benefit of our common Motherland. And they have all the necessary grounds for being heard so that their fundamental rights are finally respected.

This is the norm for any self-respecting country. And any self-respecting authority. However, all of us, Orthodox Christians, always need to remember one important truth. Until we are with God, nothing can harm us. For, as St. Athanasius (Sakharov) said, our fate does not depend on earthly rulers, but on Him who holds in His hands the fate of rulers.”

As reported, earlier Metropolitan Anthony (Pakanich) stated that Christianity is the destiny of strong and courageous people, and humility is valuable in the eyes of God and is His gift given to a man for a courageous heart.

– spzh.news