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Clergy-Laity Assembly of the Church of Finland began for the election of a new Archbishop



The Clergy-Laity Assembly of the Church of Finland commenced at the Monastery of the Transfiguration, under the presidency of His Beatitude Archbishop Leo of Helsinki and All Finland.

This Assembly marks a pivotal moment for the Church of Finland as the election of a new Archbishop is scheduled for Thursday, 28 November 2024. Archbishop Leo, who has served the Church with unwavering dedication for many years, submitted his resignation a few months ago, which was accepted by the Holy and Sacred Synod of the Ecumenical Patriarchate.

In addition to the bishops of the Church of Finland and designated lay members, the Assembly is attended by His Eminence Metropolitan Stephanos of Tallinn and All Estonia, as well as His Eminence Metropolitan Athenagoras of Kydonia.

The Clergy-Laity Assembly is expected to play a decisive role in shaping the future of the Church of Finland by selecting its new Primate. The individual chosen will guide the Church into its next chapter, ensuring the continuity of its spiritual mission and its role in the broader Orthodox Christian world.

This historic event highlights the Church's commitment to unity and collective

decision-making during this time of transition.

Patriarchal Letter Regarding the Resignation and Succession of Archbishop Leo of Finland

In a patriarchal letter addressed to Archbishop Leo of Helsinki and All Finland, the Bishops' Assembly, and the Church Council of the Orthodox Church of Finland, His All-Holiness Ecumenical Patriarchate Bartholomew clarified procedures surrounding Archbishop Leo's resignation and the election of his successor.

Archbishop Leo's resignation, submitted earlier this year, was accepted by the Holy Synod of the Ecumenical Patriarchate on 18 May 2024. His resignation will officially take effect during the Clergy-Laity Assembly in November 2024, where his successor will be chosen and formally presented for canonical approval by the Holy Synod on 1 December 2024. Until then, Archbishop Leo will remain in office and chair the electoral proceedings.

To ensure the election's transparency and adherence to canonical norms, the Bishops' Assembly of the Finnish Orthodox Church will be supplemented by Metropolitan Stephanos of Tallinn and All Estonia and, if necessary, an additional hierarch appointed by the Ecumenical Patriarchate. This arrangement aligns with the Tomos of 1923, which established the autonomy of the Finnish Orthodox Church. Should any of the current Finnish bishops become candidates for the position, Archbishop Leo is required to notify the Ecumenical Patriarchate promptly to facilitate these adjustments.

Upon announcing the election results, Archbishop Leo will officially be released from his canonical duties. The newly elected Archbishop will assume office immediately following the fulfillment of all canonical requirements, with a representative of the Ecumenical Patriarchate attending the enthronement.

Source: Church of Finland

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