07/01/2019

New Ukrainian church continues to operate as two separate groups



Despite formally uniting into one group, the so-called “Orthodox Church of Ukraine,” there are signs that the hierarchs of the “Kiev Patriarchate” (KP) and those of the “Ukrainian Autocephalous Orthodox Church” (UAOC) continue to think of themselves and operate separately.

The two groups were unable to cooperate before and during the “unification council,” forcing the Patriarchate of Constantinople to take the reins and force their tenuous union. A similar union attempt in 2015 was aborted due to the groups inability to work together.

Though not officially the head, it is clear that Philaret Denisenko sees the new nationalist church more as an expansion of his “Kiev Patriarchate” than as a true union. He saw to it through blackmail and intrigue that his protégé “Metropolitan” Epiphany Dumenko was elected as primate, and he has since made clear that he will, in fact, continue to rule the church, and he continues to vest as and style himself as a patriarch, against the enfeebled protests of the representatives from Constantinople.

Perhaps in response to Denisenko's domineering, the former UAOC also seems to be acting independently as well, despite having dissolved itself in preparation for the "unification council" (as did the KP on the morning of the "council" itself, though the groups continue to officially exist until their dissolutions are legally processed by the state registry).

The publishing department of the UAOC has released a new official liturgical calendar for the UAOC for 2019, as "Archbishop" Athanasy Shkurupy from the UAOC reported on his Facebook page on December 31.

The new calendar contains information on the episcopate of the UAOC, its "patriarchal" and "diocesan" institutions, theological educational institutions, monasteries, and the media. The cover features St. Andrew's Cathedral in Kiev, which has already been transferred by the Ukrainian government from the UAOC to Constantinople.

Moreover, the calendar refers to Makary Maletich, formerly the head of the UAOC, as the "Metropolitan of Kiev and All Ukraine"—a title that was bestowed upon Epiphany Dumenko as a result of December 15's election.

Meanwhile, Philaret Denisenko has sent out invitations to the traditional Nativity meeting on behalf of himself, the "Patriarch," rather than on behalf of the primate Epiphany Dumenko. As a source within the new church told the Ukrainian site Strana, the hierarchs of the former UAOC have no desire to participate in this event.

Patriarch Bartholomew of Constantinople intends to bestow autocephaly on this loose band of schismatics on January 6 in Constantinople.

Source: orthochristian.com

Photo: spzh.news