

## **Georgian Patriarch Ilia II speaks about need for measures against abortion, drug addiction and gambling**



The special Christmas liturgy was held at the Holy Trinity Cathedral in Tbilisi.

Delivering the Christmas Epistle, Georgian Patriarch Ilia II has emphasized a number of issues, including upbringing of future generations, education, abortions, and drug addiction problems, freedom of speech or defamation.

“Every epoch has its own Herod [King Herod I of Judaea. In the Christian tradition, Herod is the villain in the Christmas story. The Gospel of Matthew recounts how the king orders the death of all baby boys following the birth of Jesus, an event called the Massacre of the Innocents], who does not avert vicious, filthy actions, casting-off innocent children in order to enslave people and make them to forget God,” the Patriarch’s Christmas Epistle reads.

The Patriarch said that the actions of Herod are detected in different ways in the modern time.

“The blood of aborted babies call upon the heaven, drugs, gambling games, or

immoral lifestyles kills thousands of young people, and these crimes need to be responded from us...

We must get the current reality as a great test of our faith and we must avoid evil, doing same for the evil committed against us; Let's try not to lose the hope of the future, love of our neighbors and the desire to support them, let's do not lose the dignity and respond to the challenges with kindness," the Epistle reads.

Besides that, it is said in the Christmas Epistle that "freedom of speech is one of the most important rights of the public, which allows any citizen to express his/her opinion publicly through mass media and social networks that create a sense of personal freedom and create an opportunity to share own opinion with others, but, unfortunately, some people often change the reality and abuse the freedom of speech."

"Today people do not avert to insult and humiliate others; Falsehood and foul words have become a common occurrence. The gravest form of the lie – conscious lies have become widespread, the slander, which sometimes is masterly obfuscated in the name of truth, that the listeners will initially mislead. Those, who commit it, probably think that they do not physically assault and hurt others. It is a big mistake. The word has an unusual force, both positive and negative. The word can give someone life or be the same as death. Moreover, none of our words disappear, and it will be our incriminating circumstances before God," reads the Christmas Epistle.

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