

Metropolitan Anthony reminds of Lenin's "red terror" and Bolsheviks



Metropolitan Anthony (Pakanich) believes that Lenin-led Bolsheviks tried to destroy the clergy and launched a real genocide against the Church.

On September 5, 2020, Metropolitan Anthony (Pakanich), the UOC Chancellor, reminded of the 1918 decree "On Red Terror" of the Soviet government headed by Lenin, which legitimized mass repressions and punitive actions of the Soviet government and its Cheka (All-Russian Special Commission for Combating Counter-revolution) bodies against the so-called "class enemies", according to the [Information and Education Department of the UOC](#).

Metropolitan Anthony reminded that "entire layers of the population – the bourgeoisie, nobles, officers, clergy, kulaks (rich peasants. – Trans.), Cossacks, intellectuals – were assigned to class enemies", according to the decree.

According to the hierarchy, one of the first to fall under this punitive decree was the Orthodox clergy in the territories occupied by the Bolsheviks in Ukraine, Russia, and Belarus, where in the period 1918-1919 years at least a thousand Orthodox priests were shot dead by the Bolsheviks.

The Metropolitan reminded that after the decree "On Red Terror" of September 5, 1918, executions similar to those of Metropolitan Vladimir (Bogoyavlensky) of Kiev had already acquired the "legal" semblance.

"One of the first victims of this decree was Bishop Isidore (Kolokolov), who was shot dead on September 20, 1918. This was followed by the executions of the holy martyrs Bishop Theophanes (Ilmensky; + 24.12.1918) of Solikamsk, Bishop Plato (Kulbush; 14.01.1919) of Revel, and many others. Although even before this ill-fated decree, the Bolsheviks had already carried out the executions of Orthodox bishops: Archbishop Andronicus (Nikolsky; + 20.06.1918) of Perm; Bishop Ambrose (Gudko; + 09.08.1918) of Sarapul; Archbishop Vasily (Bogoyavlensky; + 27.08.1918) of Chernigov and Nezhin and others," the bishop wrote.

At the end of 1918 and the beginning of 1919, 825 people were shot within several months, and during this time, according to official data from the Cheka, 8,389 people were shot, 9,496 people were imprisoned in concentration camps, and 34,334 were imprisoned; 13,111 people were taken hostage and 86,893 people were arrested.

Metropolitan Anthony reminded that "the organizers themselves testified to the God-fighting nature of the Red Terror." Thus, in the directives of the head of the All-Ukrainian Cheka, M. Latsis, it was noted: "The sacrifices we demand are the sacrifices of salvation, the sacrifices that pave the way to the Bright Kingdom of Labor, Freedom and Truth. Blood. Let the blood be shed... For only the complete irreversible death of this world will save us from the rebirth of the old jackals, the jackals we dispose of."

In justifying the "red terror" policy, the Cheka leaders instructed their subordinates: "We are not fighting against individuals; we are destroying the bourgeoisie as a class... Do not look for accusatory evidence in the case as to whether he rebelled against the Soviet government with arms or words. Your first duty is to ask him what class he belongs to, what his origin is, what his education is and what his profession is. These questions should resolve the fate of the accused. This is the purpose and essence of the Red Terror."

According to Metropolitan Anthony, "the clergy were destroyed with extraordinary

fury as a 'hostile class'. In fact, it was a real genocide against the Church."

"According to historians, from 1918 to the late 1930s, tens of thousands of clergymen were shot or died in camps and exiles during the repressive policies of the communist regime," the hierarch said.

The UOC Chancellor pointed out that "the names of many of them still remain unknown, and only about 2,000 of them are glorified in the Synaxis of Holy New Martyrs and Confessors of the twentieth century. He also noted that the Ukrainian Orthodox Church continues to collect information about bishops, priests and believers, who died as martyrs during the years of communist persecution.

"Every settlement in Ukraine has its martyrs and confessors who suffered for their faith in the twentieth century. In each area there are places of mass executions or burials of innocent victims of repression. In the Kyiv region, such places include the Lukyanov Cemetery and the October Palace in Kyiv, but the most mass burial place for victims of repression is the Bykovnia Forest near Kyiv where, according to various estimates, there were buried from 60 to 100 thousand shot victims, among whom were many Orthodox priests and believers," the bishop said.

Metropolitan Anthony noted that "all these places are sacred for us, Orthodox, because the blood of Christian martyrs was shed there, and the bodies of many of them rest there."

"It is our duty, both clergy and laity, to search for such places, to install memorials and crosses there, to collect information about the repressed, to restore their names from oblivion and, most importantly, to prayerfully honor the memory of these innocent martyrs for their faith, whose feat helped our Church and our people to withstand. We must all remember their great deed, so that such tragic pages of our history will never happen again," the hierarch upheld.

On the Day of Remembrance of the victims of the "Red Terror", Metropolitan Anthony called on all Orthodox to prayerfully honor the feat of our new martyrs and confessors of the twentieth century, "and to pray for all the innocent victims of the terrible communist repressions."

[Source](#)