04/10/2020

Lugansk wildfire damages two Ukrainian churches in span of a day



Over the course of 24 hours, the forest fire raging in the Lugansk Province caused damage to two churches of the Severodonetsk Diocese of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church. The churches of the diocese have also begun to collect humanitarian aid for the victims.

The massive fire has destroyed 24,700 acres of land, including hundreds of homes. And on the territory of the Holy Cross Church in the village of Lesnaya Dacha, several outbuildings completely burned down. Utility rooms at the Church of St. Tabitha of Joppa in the village of Voronovo were also destroyed, the Diocese of Severodonetsk reports.

In both cases, the churches themselves were not harmed.

His Eminence Metropolitan Nikodim of Severodonetsk expressed his condolences and sympathies, saying: “It was with deep sorrow that we learned the news about the dead and injured in the fires, about the grief that the fire brought to people. Many were left homeless, desolate and exhausted. We worry with them and pray that the Lord will strengthen them, send comfort and help, and give rest to the souls of the dead. I urge you not to stop praying so that the fires will finally subside and no one else will be injured in this disaster.”

With the blessing of Met. Nikodim, all churches in the diocese began collecting humanitarian aid for residents of nearby villages affected by the fires. His Eminence also blessed the faithful to pray the Akathist of the Mother of God “the Burning Bush” yesterday to support the efforts of the firefighters.

The fire broke out on Wednesday following unusually hot weather and quickly spreading, hitting 31 localities. At least 9 people have died and 14 have been hospitalized.

Source