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Patriarch Kirill calls on Ukraine's Orthodox Christians not to give in to temptation



Patriarch Kirill of Moscow and All Russia has expressed support for Ukraine's Orthodox Christians and said he hopes he can visit that country again and pray with its people.

"Apostle Paul said very good words in his epistle to Thessalonians: brothers, stand firm and hold fast to the teachings. [...] I would like to say these words to my Ukrainian flock," the patriarch said in an interview with Interfax before the 10th anniversary of his enthronement.

These teachings are a symbol of the faith that the church preaches, he said. "Hold fast to this faith. Resist all temptations," the patriarch said, addressing Ukraine's Orthodox Christians.

"Hearing the voice of the Church is the most important thing for believers in Ukraine now and this voice sounds excellent through His Beatitude Metropolitan Onufry and the bishops of our Church," he said.

"One needs to hear that voice and live in accordance with what the Church teaches and what it calls for. Then no political turbulence will mislead people," the patriarch

said.

In the first five years after his election, Patriarch Kirill visited Ukraine annually to lead celebrations of the anniversary of the Christening of Rus. He visited many cities in the eastern and western parts of the country and led meetings of the Synod of the Russian Orthodox Church in Kiev.

The patriarch's visits stopped after the change of administration in 2014. However, the patriarch does not believe that he can no longer visit Ukraine.

"I hope that the Lord will allow me to visit Ukraine again, because the political situation is a thing that changes. Today we have one situation and tomorrow we have a different one. Political forces come and go. Therefore, I continue to hope that I can pray in the Kiev-Pechersk Lavra, meet with my flock, with the bishops of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church, which is now heroically defending the canonical Orthodox faith," he said.

(Source: Interfax)