

Poroshenko receives delegation of Ecumenical Patriarchate



Ukrainian President Petro Poroshenko has received a delegation of the Ecumenical Patriarchate, which arrived in Ukraine to participate in the liturgy and the ceremony of enthronement of a Primate of the newly created Orthodox Church of Ukraine (OCU), Metropolitan of Kyiv and All Ukraine Epifaniy (Epiphanius). “I’d like to convey my warmest congratulations and words of gratitude to His Holiness the Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew over this event. This happened and became possible due to his great love for Ukraine and Ukrainians,” the president said on February 3, adding that it was an outstanding event both for church life and the Orthodox community, and for the Ukrainian state as a whole. He added that the OCU has come a long way toward uniting and obtaining a tomos of autocephaly, which became possible, among other things, thanks to the efforts of the exarchs of the Ecumenical Patriarchate. “Today is a big day for Ukraine. And I’m glad that the delegation of the Ecumenical Patriarchate is with us on this day,” he stressed.

In turn, Metropolitan of France, Emmanuel, reaffirmed support of Ukraine and its

new Orthodox Church on the part of the Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew. “His Holiness moved forward on the issue of granting autocephaly to the Ukrainian church, because the people of Ukraine had asked for it. And you were also the first Ukrainian citizen who assumed, I would say, a risk, but at the same time took a great opportunity,” he said, according to the president’s press service. The enthronement the OCU Primate is an important historical moment for Ukraine, he stressed. Metropolitan Emmanuel added that a representative of Athos’s Xenophon monastery, Archimandrite Alexiy came to Ukraine as part of their delegation. It was in this monastery that the text of the tomos was drafted. He expressed hope that President Poroshenko would visit Athos and the monastery where the historic document was prepared.

The Unification Council of members of the Ukrainian Orthodox churches in Kyiv on December 15 elected Metropolitan of Pereyaslavsky and Bila Tserkva from the then Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the Kyiv Patriarchate Epifaniy (also known as Epiphanius I) as head of the new local Orthodox church in Ukraine. On January 6, Epifaniy, as Primate of the Orthodox Church of Ukraine and Metropolitan of Kyiv and All Ukraine, received from Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew I in Istanbul the tomos of autocephaly (independence) of the Orthodox Church of Ukraine. Metropolitan of Kyiv and All Ukraine Epifaniy was inaugurated as Primate of the newly created Orthodox Church of Ukraine at Kyiv’s Saint Sophia Cathedral on February 3.

(Source: UNIAN)