

Ukrainian police open criminal case against Kiev Caves Lavra



Ukraine's successor to the KGB and counterintelligence and anti-terrorism agency has announced a criminal case against the Kiev Caves Lavra, in connection with the supposed loss of 10 museum items not found during a recent audit.

Unlike other former USSR nations, the Ukrainian state has not returned many of the most valuable Church sites to the control of the Church. Thus, the Kiev Caves and Pochaev Lavras are officially state museums that are only temporarily leased out for Church use.

The criminal proceedings are registered by the National Police according to materials of the Ukrainian Security Service, on the supposed fact of the embezzlement of museum valuables that were transferred to the custody of officials of the Kiev Caves Lavra, reports the department's press service.

The Investigation is continuing, the press service reports.

A special commission of the Ukrainian Ministry of Culture conducted an

unannounced inventory at the Lavra on November 29, for the first time in 30 years. The move was perceived by the Church as a provocation, just two weeks before the “unification council” that created a new church in Ukraine.

The Ministry of Culture then reported that 8 icons of the late 19th century, a wooden cross, and a chalice that had been transferred to the Lavra were not found in the inventory taken in late November. The abbot His Eminence Metropolitan Pavel of Vyshgorod and Chernobyl explained that 829 total items had been transferred for the opening of the Lavra in 1988, and that the 10 items in question are not particularly valuable compared to the other items, despite the Ministry of Culture’s statements that ancient icons have been lost.

The Security Service also conducted a search at Met. Pavel’s residence at the Lavra’s dependency in the village of Voronki in the Kiev Oblast, where they seized the brochure *The Ukrainian Orthodox Church: Relations with the State. The Attitude Towards the Conflict in Donbass and to the Church Schism. Questions and Answers.*

The search came just one day after Met. Pavel spoke about the pressure against him and many other hierarchs and clergy of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church, saying, “I wouldn’t be surprised if there were searches and harassments.”

([Source: Orthodox Christianity](#))