

Russian Orthodox Church will not commemorate the Ecumenical Patriarch of Constantinople during Liturgies



Orthodoxy is again faced with crucial challenges in the coming period, as the coming Feast of Orthodoxy, celebrated on the first Sunday after the opening of the Great Lent, will witness the first time that the Russian Orthodox Church, and its affiliated Churches, will not commemorate the name of the Ecumenical Patriarch of Constantinople, and the Ecumenical Patriarchate, in prayers during the Liturgy.

The issue of granting autocephaly, by Ecumenical Patriarchate to the Orthodox Church of the Ukraine, is a dominant ecclesiastical issue facing the world's Orthodox Patriarchates at present.

Along these lines, the Orthodox Metropolitan of Belgium, His Eminence Athenagoras, this week expressed his concerns over the matter, noting that "this year, our common confession during the great celebration of Orthodoxy will be overshadowed".

Concerns have also been raised by Orthodox hierarchs around the world on the question of whether the Ecumenical Patriarchate can unilaterally grant autocephaly.

For instance, the Archbishop of Tirana, Durres and All Albania, His Beatitude

Anastasios, last week called on the Ecumenical Patriarchate to convene a pan-Orthodox synod, in order, as he said, to avoid the danger of a schism within the Orthodox Church.

At the same time, the Russian Orthodox Church has referred to a violation of canonical laws by the Ecumenical Patriarchate. In reply the Church of Constantinople has reminded of its role as the Mother Church of Orthodoxy.