

OPEN LETTER to HIS HOLINESS KYRIL, PATRIARCH of MOSCOW

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Paris, 09 March 2022

Your Holiness:

In these dark days when war is raging in the middle of Europe following the military intervention of the Russian Federation in Ukraine, allow me to convey to you the dismay of the entire Archdiocese and our total solidarity with the victims of this conflict.

The troubles and disorder caused throughout the world by this violent attack have not spared the Orthodox community of Western Europe and above all the archdiocese of Orthodox parishes of Russian tradition in Western Europe, which brings together faithful of all origins. Our very unity is threatened by the situation that has thus arisen. Our faithful expect their pastors to bring the voice of the Church and an evangelical message of peace.

We learned with emotion of the appeal made to you by the members of the Holy Synod of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church, asking you to intervene with the political authorities of the Russian Federation to stop this bloodbath.

On behalf of all the faithful of our Archdiocese, I appeal to you to raise your voice as Primate of the Russian Orthodox Church against this monstrous and senseless war and to intercede with the authorities of the Russian Federation so that this murderous conflict ceases as soon as possible, which until recently seemed unthinkable between two peoples and two nations united by centuries of history and their common faith in Christ.

Your Holiness, in your "homily" for the Sunday of Forgiveness, delivered in the Patriarchal Cathedral of Christ the Saviour on the 6th March, you imply that you justify this war of cruel and murderous aggression as "a metaphysical battle", in the name of the "right to be on the side of the light, on the side of God's truth, of what the light of Christ reveals to us, His word, His Gospel...".

With all the respect that is due to you, and from which I do not depart, but also with infinite pain, I must bring to your attention that I cannot subscribe to such a reading of the Gospel. Nothing can ever justify that the "good shepherds" that we must be should cease to be "artisans of peace", whatever the circumstances.

Your Holiness, humbly, with a heavy heart, please do all you can to end this terrible war that is dividing the world and sowing death and destruction.

† Metropolitan JOHN of Dubna

Archbishop of the Orthodox Churches of Russian Tradition in Western Europe.