

## **APPEAL OF THE PRIESTS OF THE RUSSIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH WITH A CALL FOR RECONCILIATION AND ENDING THE WAR**

We, the priests and deacons of the Russian Orthodox Church, each in our own name, appeal to everyone on whom the cessation of the fratricidal war in Ukraine depends, with a call for reconciliation and an immediate ceasefire.

We send this appeal after Sunday about the Last Judgment and on the eve of Forgiveness Sunday.

The Last Judgment awaits every person. No earthly authority, no doctors, no guards will protect from this judgment. Concerned about the salvation of every person who considers himself a child of the Russian Orthodox Church, we do not want him to appear at this judgment, bearing the heavy burden of mother's curses. We remind you that the Blood of Christ, shed by the Savior for the life of the world, will be received in the sacrament of Communion by those people who give murderous orders, not into life, but into eternal torment.

We mourn the trial that our brothers and sisters in Ukraine were undeservedly subjected to. We remind you that the life of every person is a priceless and unique gift of God, and therefore we wish the return of all soldiers - both Russian and Ukrainian - to their homes and families safe and sound.

We bitterly think about the abyss that our children and grandchildren in Russia and Ukraine will have to overcome in order to once again begin to be friends with each other, respect and love each other.

We respect the God-given freedom of man, and we believe that the people of Ukraine should make their choice on their own, not at gunpoint, without pressure from the West or the East. In anticipation of Forgiveness Sunday, we remind you that the gates of paradise are opened to anyone, even a seriously sinned person, if he asks for forgiveness from those whom he humiliated, insulted, despised, or from those who were killed by his hands or by his order. There is no other way but forgiveness and mutual reconciliation.

“The voice of your brother's blood cries out to Me from the ground; and now you are cursed from the earth, which has opened its mouth to receive the blood of your brother from your hand,” God said to Cain, who was envious of his younger brother. Woe to every person who realizes that these words are addressed to him personally.

No non-violent call for peace and an end to war should be forcibly suppressed and considered as a violation of the law, for such is the divine commandment: "Blessed are the peacemakers."

We call on all warring parties to dialogue, because there is no other alternative to violence. Only the ability to hear the other can give hope for a way out of the abyss into which our countries were thrown in just a few days. Let yourself and all of us enter Great Lent in the spirit of faith, hope and love.  
Stop the war.

Priests and deacons of the Russian Orthodox Church who wish to sign the letter can write to [russianpriestsforpeace@gmail.com](mailto:russianpriestsforpeace@gmail.com)