

ORDER OF SAINT ANDREW

ARCHONS OF THE ECUMENICAL PATRIARCHATE

Defenders of the Faith

April 13, 2022

Dear Brother Archon

We are all watching in horror at the tragedy in Ukraine as it unfolds daily. Much has been written about how the Russians intend to absorb Ukraine in an effort to recapture the glory of the USSR. One small consolation is that the world has risen up with tremendous aid for the people of Ukraine (the Order recently made a contribution as well). All of us stand with Ukraine.

While this invasion is occurring, there is another act of aggression that has received virtually no notice. It is the retaliation by the Russian Orthodox Church and the Russian government against the Ecumenical Patriarch for granting autocephaly to the Ukrainian Orthodox Church. This retaliation has escalated the decade long efforts by the Russian Orthodox Church to replace Constantinople with Moscow as the new site of the Ecumenical Patriarchate. The goal of the Russian state is to use the Orthodox Church as a political tool for Russian Nationalism and expansionism.

The current Patriarch of the Russian Orthodox Church, Patriarch Kirill, has a long history of close ties with the KGB and is a member of Vladimir Putin's cabinet. The relationship between Patriarch Kirill and Putin is such that Kirill refers to Putin as "a gift from God." Here is a photo of how Russian soldiers venerate Putin (yes, that icon of Putin is real):



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On October 15, 2018, the Russian Orthodox Church severed full communion with the Ecumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople in retaliation for the brave historical decision by His All Holiness to grant Autocephaly to the Ukrainian Orthodox Church that same year.

The Russian state has always treated Ukraine as a poor stepchild to do with as Moscow pleased. During the height of the USSR, Moscow even banned Ukrainian being taught in Ukrainian schools. Recognizing that there would likely be retaliation, our Ecumenical Patriarch nonetheless took the extraordinarily brave step of granting independence to the Ukrainian Orthodox Church. Now, the Mother Church is feeling the consequences of the wrath of Vladimir Putin.

As we all know, it is only the Ecumenical Patriarch that can grant Autocephaly to a particular church. Despite this, the Russians have been putting enormous pressure on other Orthodox Churches not to recognize the Autocephalous Ukrainian Orthodox Church. As a result of threats by the ROC, only the Churches of Greece, Alexandria and Cyprus have (so far) recognized the Autocephalous Ukrainian Orthodox Church. In an effort to show the other Orthodox jurisdictions what happens when you cross the Russians, the ROC has now invaded the jurisdiction of the Alexandria Orthodox Church by going into Africa and converting over 200 parishes from the Alexandria Church to the Russian Orthodox Church. They have also gone into Turkey and are in the process of setting up a Russian Orthodox Church in the backyard of our own Ecumenical Patriarchate.

The other Orthodox jurisdictions are watching in horror as the ROC attempts to absorb through its unilateral action the lands that are canonically exclusive to other jurisdictions. The faithful in Africa largely have no idea that this is happening because these are Orthodox Churches with an Orthodox Liturgy and they may not fully appreciate that they are now being run by the Russians. This invasion of Africa has the potential for far reaching consequences. Simply put, the ROC's goal is not salvation, but rather Russian imperialism.

So, why does this relate to you (the person reading this communication)? It's simple. You are an Archon. You have been hand picked by His All Holiness to defend our faith and the Mother Church. This means you are expected to do more than the average person. Clicking the "like" button on Facebook is not enough. You have been selected to take action and do much more.

Because of the loss of human life, nobody is paying attention to what the Russian Orthodox Church is doing in Africa or that the Russian Orthodox Church is actively cooperating with Turkey to open Russian Orthodox Churches there. It is up to us to make the world care about this as well and to formulate a strategy to stop this active threat.

It is the Archons alone who are dedicated solely to the preservation of the Ecumenical Patriarchate. We do this on a shoestring budget of about \$1.1 million per year. We rely solely on your financial support because we do not receive any funding from any other source nor do we get any grants from any government. On the other hand, the combined resources of the Russians and

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Turks directed towards the extinguishment of the Ecumenical Patriarchate totals in many hundreds of millions of dollars.

A number of the new Archons have not pledged to the Exarch's Appeal. Where are you? We need you! Up until recently, we had a near 100% of our new Archons become sponsors of the Exarch's Appeal.

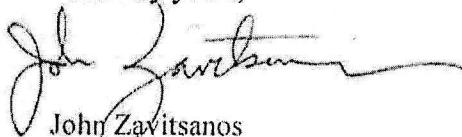
Attached is the list of final sponsors in 2021. These are the men who pledged at least \$3,000 annually as part of the Exarch's Appeal to help cover our yearly budget. That equals \$250 per month. To those men, Axios! While every Archon is obviously free to donate any amount their conscience dictates, we have a reasonable expectation that every Archon will pledge at least \$3,000 (particularly all of the new Archons of 2020 and 2021). We cannot beat back the Russians and Turks without your financial assistance. \$3,000 covers one day of our budget. You can (and should) sponsor more days, but one day is a good place to start. The future of the Church for your children and grandchildren is at stake here. You have been drafted to protect that future. Pledging \$500 or \$600 won't cut it.

If your name is not on the sponsor list, we would like to add it. We want 100% participation for the classes of 2020 and 2021. All you need to do is reach out to Christa at ~~christa~~@goarch.org and let her know that you are willing to sponsor one day of the Order's expenses. We strongly encourage you to put your pledge on your credit card and pay it in twelve (12) equal installments. That pledge will auto-renew every month until such time as you direct otherwise. The sponsor list will be published again in 45 days.

We expect every Archon to fulfill their moral obligation of time, talent and treasure. Please take a moment to contact Christa today or you can go online and complete your pledge here: <https://donatenow.networkforgood.org/1420060?code=donate-1>.

I want to wish everyone a blessed Lenten season.

Sincerely yours,



John Zavitsanos
Archon Ekdikos