



**УКРАЇНСЬКА ПРАВОСЛАВНА ЦЕРКВА В КАНАДІ**  
**UKRAINIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH OF CANADA**  
**L'ÉGLISE ORTHODOXE UKRAINIENNE DU CANADA**

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November 20, 2014

**Statement**  
**Episcopate of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of Canada**  
**on the occasion of the Day of Dignity and Freedom on the Second Anniversary of the**  
**Revolution of Dignity in Ukraine**

*To the beloved clergy and faithful of the UOCC,*

Glory to Jesus Christ!

The Day of Dignity and Freedom is commemorated on November 21, 2015 by our brothers and sisters in Ukraine to remember the second year anniversary of the beginning of the Revolution of Dignity. We join our brothers and sisters in Ukraine in remembering the tumultuous, tragic events and the 128 who lost their lives defending their fellow citizens.

We recall the Revolution of Dignity began on November 21, 2013 and unfolded over the next 94 days in Kyiv, the capital of Ukraine, as well as in many other cities. At first called Euromaidan, it took the form of a political rally, but it quickly grew into a mass social and spiritual movement against the corrupt authoritarian regime. The Ukrainian people voiced their aspirations to build an equitable and civil society based on fundamental Christian values and human rights. Two years later Ukrainian society still must contend with the aftermath of these events. Ukraine battles Russian-supported terrorists and Russian incursion in the Eastern oblasts and annexation of Crimea. In an atmosphere of social and economic crisis, the Ukrainian people must also wrestle with a great internal demon – the entrenched moral blight of corruption and bribery.

It is most symbolic that the revolution began on November 21, on the feast day of the Synaxis of Archangel Michael and the Bodiless Powers. Archangel Michael, who is the patron saint of Kyiv city, defeated satan and the fallen angels, banishing them from the Heavenly Kingdom. He serves as the best example of the defender of Truth. Just as the Archangel gathered his armies of angels and united the ranks of angels, the Ukrainian people came together on this same feast day and began the process of ridding their land of iniquity. Archangel Michael's example shows us that success lies in serving Truth and being faithful to God.

The Revolution of Dignity also changed the course of spiritual history in Ukrainian society. These three months of 2013-2014 fostered a living Faith and awakened those values that define us as followers of Christ – unity and love for our fellow man and oneness in the Lord. The Church assumed its rightful place in society providing a moral compass and serving as the voice of authority and trust. After playing a defining role in the revolutionary events, the Church continues

its leadership and humanitarian work in society. It provides spiritual care, military chaplaincy and humanitarian aid to soldiers, the war-wounded and refugees. Most importantly, the Church now helps the Ukrainian people make sense of the uncertainty, chaos and conflict afflicting their society.

After centuries of oppression, the Revolution of Dignity was only the beginning of building a new society based on traditional Christian values. Despite the current tribulations plaguing the world, we encourage democratic governments and international aid organizations to continue to support the Ukrainian people. We also encourage our faithful to pray for the Ukrainian people and for the eternal memory of those who have perished defending their homeland and fellow citizens. When the Lord grants us such an opportunity, let us share the bounties that we enjoy in Canada with those in greater need in our spiritual homeland.

In Canada, we can be nothing but inspired by the sacrifices of these ordinary women and men in Ukraine who selflessly followed our Lord's teachings to love their families and fellow citizens (Jn 15:13) – even laying down their lives – as they took on a tyrannical regime and continue to repel an invading enemy with superior weaponry. Their example provides an opportunity to re-examine our commitment to God, our families, our Church and our country Canada.

On this second Day of Dignity and Freedom and as we soon prepare to begin the Nativity Fast, let us contemplate what it means to have human dignity and freedom – not only in the sense of personal autonomy. God granted us free will when He created us in His image. As St. John Cassian explains, the Lord gave His own creation the power to choose to accept God's Grace for our salvation. Through His Grace we become pure, and our will is no longer limited by our passions. It is this freedom that gives meaning in our life.

*O Lord, hear our prayers for our Motherland Ukraine in this time of great need. We ask You, O Merciful Heavenly Father, to protect the Ukrainian people and guide its leadership to follow your Truth. O Holy Theotokos, spread your omophorion of protection over the Ukrainian land.*

*We magnify you, Holy Archangel of God, Michael, and you, the Holy Archangels, Angels, Principalities, Dominions, Thrones, Virtues, Powers, Cherubim and Fearsome Seraphim who glorify God. Supreme Commanders of the Heavenly Hosts, we, the unworthy, ever entreat that through your prayers you surround us with the protection of the wings of your immaterial glory. Glory to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit both now and ever unto ages of ages. Amen.*

*With Hierarchical Blessing,*

† **YURIJ**, Metropolitan  
Ukrainian Orthodox Church of Canada  
† **ILARION**, Bishop  
Ukrainian Orthodox Church of Canada  
† **ANDRIY**, Bishop  
Ukrainian Orthodox Church of Canada