



Your Eminence Yurij, Archbishop of Winnipeg and the Central Eparchy, Metropolitan of Canada, beloved brother and concelebrant in Christ, precious clergy and laity of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church in Canada, our dear spiritual children in the Lord: grace and peace be to you from above.

It is with all great pride, albeit with heavy heart that we are communicating with all of you today from the historic and *martyric* Mother Church of Constantinople on the solemn occasion of the eightieth anniversary of the Holodomor of the Ukrainian Nation.

As we prayerfully commemorate the tragic and inhumane events during the years 1932-1933, when countless people lost their lives through a deliberate and brutal famine, we pray for the repose of the victims' souls and for the healing of this painful wound in the conscience of your blessed Nation. It is impossible to fathom the magnitude and intensity of such hostility, which caused human beings to destroy other human beings created "in the image and likeness" of God – all supposedly in the name of political ideology, but ultimately only fuelled by falsehood and godlessness.

In our time, dearly beloved, we are obliged to remember the past and learn from its tragedies so that we may understand how to move ahead into the future with compassion and forgiveness. We are called to discern and avoid every spiteful ideology and divisive prejudice, which discriminate against other people either individually or collectively whether on ethnic and racial or religious and cultural differences. As Orthodox Christians, we must at all times strive to bridge differences and cultivate fraternal relations with all people, while remaining humbly faithful to our own ecclesiastical teachings and traditions.

"I am the way and the truth and the life," (John 14:6) says our Lord. With this divine assurance, we find great consolation and encouragement. For it is in the Church as His sacred Body that we are spared of sorrow and suffering, while at the same time, we find strength to forgive and love all people.

May God grant rest to the souls of all victims of the Holodomor. And may God bless all of you.

At the Ecumenical Patriarchate, the 24th of November, 2013

Your Eminence's
beloved brother in Christ,

✠ BARTHOLOMEW
Archbishop of Constantinople-New Rome
and Ecumenical Patriarch

