

# In this number

TEUVO LAITILA

## A Hundred Years of Independence: The Road to the Orthodox Church in Ukraine

The article examines and contextualizes the four key declarations—in 1921, 1942, 1989, and 2018–2019—that led to an autocephalous Orthodox Church being declared in Ukraine. The first and third were initiated by “people,” that is, by ordinary clerics and laypeople upon the formation and the eventual collapse of the Soviet Union, while the second and the fourth were orchestrated by bishops in Ukraine and Russia, together with the Ecumenical Patriarchate and Ukrainian politicians in the highest offices. Predictably, the Russian Orthodox Church resisted these changes, having not been the *primus motor*, and declared Ukrainian ecclesiastical independence uncanonical. Nevertheless, the EP finally assented to the recurrent appeals of both the Ukrainian Orthodox bishops and politicians for autocephaly, risking a full break with the Russian church. At present, it seems evident that the decision had more to do with mundane and ecclesiastical policy than with the wishes of the Ukrainian Orthodox majority, the conflict taking place solely at the political and ecclesiastical (or canonical) level. If this state of matters prevails, the possibility for a peaceful resolution to the crisis remains low.

MIKKO KETOLA

## The Path of the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church, 2014–2019

For the Greek Catholic Church in Ukraine, the last five years have marked its rise to prominence in both the Ukrainian ecclesiastical landscape and social debate. The Greek Catholic Church shoulders the theological burden of having both a Catholic and an Orthodox community and has often been poorly understood, regarded as a strange ecclesiastical hodgepodge and a wild card in ecumenical relations. In particular, the Moscow Patriarchate has regarded the church as a hindrance to closer ecumenical relations with the Vatican. The annexation of the Crimean peninsula to Russia and the Russian occupation of eastern Ukraine have inflamed relations of Greek Catholics with the Vatican, the former criticizing the Pope for misidentifying the Ukrainian war as a civil war, hoping for a more direct condemnation of Russia’s actions. They were also disappointed by the Pope’s decision to meet the Patriarch in Cuba in 2016 and their resulting declara-

tion. Nevertheless, relations have since been on the mend. Greek Catholics have welcomed the birth of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church supported by the Patriarchate of Constantinople, even seeing this as a precursor to a future Patriarchate of Kiev, in which even Greek Catholics might join.

## HIEROMONK DAMASKINOS (OLKINUORA) OF XENOPHONTOS

### Canonical Questions Related to the Autocephaly of the Orthodox Church in Ukraine

This article discusses four canonical questions that have been debated throughout the process of the granting of autocephaly to the Orthodox Church in Ukraine in 2019 by the Ecumenical Patriarchate. These are: 1) Ukraine as the canonical territory of the Ecumenical Patriarchate; 2) the Ecumenical Patriarchate’s right to receive an *ekklētos* (appeal from clergy) from within the jurisdiction of other local churches; 3) the recognition of schismatic ordinations in the process of the return of schismatics to the canonical church; 4) the right of the Ecumenical Patriarchate to grant autocephalies. These questions are explored using ecclesiastical canons, as well as commentaries on these texts.

HETA HURSKAINEN

### The Orthodox Churches in Ukraine and Ecumenism

The article examines the influence of the changing situation of the Ukrainian Orthodox churches on ecumenical relations. The time frame is from 1991 to the present day, the focus being on how the changes within Orthodoxy in Ukraine have impacted their ecumenical relations. Up to 2018, the Ukrainian Orthodox Church under the Moscow Patriarchate was the only orthodox church able to participate in the official ecumenical dialogues. With the establishment of the Orthodox Church of Ukraine in 2018, however, the situation has changed drastically. The Moscow Patriarchate has refused to participate in any ecumenical dialogues where the Ecumenical Patriarchate would act as chair or co-chair. This means that the Ukrainian Orthodox Church under the Moscow Patriarchate does not participate in the ecumenical practices, while the door is at least theoretically open now for the Orthodox Church in Ukraine to take part in various ecumenical dialogues.