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MODERN ACCENTS OF THEOLOGICAL REFLECTIONS OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE UKRAINIAN GREEK CATHOLIC CHURCH REGARDING THE WAR AND ITS CHALLENGES

By Olga Nedavnya

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Abstract

The article analyzes the relevant thematic documents and materials with the purpose of determining the ways, means and features of the theological search of the representatives of the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church (hereafter UGCC) in relation to the challenges of Russia's war against Ukraine. The principles of objectivity and confessional non-commitment became the methodological basis of the research. The hermeneutic method, system and content analysis, and the method of doctrinal verification were used. The scientific novelty of the research is determined by the appeal to a socially important hot topic, which is just beginning to be studied by scientists based on sources that have arrived mainly in recent months; the scientific novelty consists in identifying the most characteristic theological accents in the instructions, reflections and discussions of both the clergy of the UGCC and the laity, identifying the tendency of the military theme in the theological reflections of the representatives of this Church becoming very saturated, and expanding from theoretical foundations to specific issues that arise from the practice of war. The Head of the UGCC, its military chaplains, and priests and laymen who are active in media reflect on them, and these reflections become the starting points of active, with interactive feedback, discussions that expand even outside the Greek Catholic environment. Among the revealed theological accents, the following are especially emphasized: 1) the “Russian World” concept as defined by the ideology of Russian chauvinism and the justification of war; 2) the mission of Ukrainians to protect both their territories and souls, as well as the entire civilized world, from it; 3) the theological issues of the value of peace, rightly supplemented by the issues of achieving and protecting a just peace, as well as 4) issues of the value, necessity and divine inspiration of effective patriotism; 5) the value of the “Kyiv Church” traditions; 6) the theological developments of the UGCC; 7) the experience of the activity of this Church guided by them in the circumstances of armed aggression; and 8) the value of Christian optimism, which is helpful for resistance to enemies and one's own spiritual stability and development, even in adverse and difficult conditions.

Keywords: Ukrainian Greek-Catholic Church, theological reflections, Russia's war against Ukraine.

Introduction

Russia's war against Ukraine in the 21st century began with the seizure of Crimea in 2014. The reactions of all social actors to it were indicative of both Ukrainian patriotism and the real desire for European integration, as well as—among church actors—their real piety and humanity of their faith. For Ukrainian Christian Churches, from leaders to ordinary believers, it is a test of fidelity to the teachings of Christ, a challenge for their theology and its modern application in practice. The situation of military operations in the territory of these Churches is new for the absolute majority of their clergy and laity, but not for the centuries-old legacy of the corpus of theological works of all Churches in this thematic field. Undoubtedly, the relevant theoretical work, including social doctrines, decrees, instructions and appeals, merits separate large-scale studies (and we are already conducting them), but for now, parallel to this, it is important to follow modern accents in the theological reflections of church representatives.

The Ukrainian Greek-Catholic Church (UGCC) is particularly interesting in the context of such investigations as this Church, which, among other Churches in Ukraine, probably has the most recent and useful experience (at the distance of one generation and still living witnesses) of activity in war conditions. This is not just the experience of survival as a Christian community, but an effectively and distinctly Ukrainian-centric, patriotic experience of struggle for life in the European cultural environment. Today's reflections of church factors, in particular Greek-Catholic ones, about the challenges of Russia's war against Ukraine are not only valuable evidence of what this Church is for Ukrainians now, but also material for the expedient specification of the religious-spiritual and cultural-civilizational orientation of Ukrainians--specification which is necessary both for our victory over the aggressor, and for the subsequent position of Ukraine's rightful place among the other peoples of Europe.

Analysis of the Latest Research and Publications on this Issue

The study of theological insights regarding the challenges of war, in particular in the environment of the UGCC, is already attracting the attention of scholars. The theological reflections of the head of all Catholics, Pope Francis, the Vatican's Ostpolitik, and the reactions of the Greek Catholic clergy and laity are actively explored by V. Volkovskii¹ and A.

¹ Володимир Волковський,. “Три питання для Церков після расизму і Хресної Дороги.” *Релігійно-інформаційна служба України*. [Volodymyr Volkovskii, “Three questions for Churches after racism and the Way of the Cross.” *Religious and Information Service of Ukraine*]. https://risu.ua/tri-pitannya-dlya-cerkov-pislya-rasizmu-i-hresnoyi-dorogi_n128429. Accessed 16.11.2022.

Babinskii.² Various aspects of modern practical application of theological instructions about war are also analyzed. O. Sagan, in several of his works,³ considered the activities of military chaplains (among whom there are many representatives of the UGCC). O. Nedavnya observed⁴ the online theological activities in this Church. The research of I. Lutsan and I. Horokholinska,⁵ which is based on the materials of a survey of the opinion of clergymen (in particular from the UGCC) about the practical application of the theological provisions of social service during the war, is also valuable. However, many aspects of the theological understanding of the current situation remain unexplored, while relevant material, especially from the UGCC environment, arrives daily.

The Purpose and Tasks of the Research

I have chosen as the goal of the article to determine the ways and means of revealing the theological searches of the representatives of the UGCC in relation to the challenges of Russia's war against Ukraine and to identify their most significant characteristics. Accordingly, the task is to determine what proposals for thematic theological reflections come from the bosom of this Church, what ideas and instructions are expressed, what specific questions are asked and discussed. To achieve this, we turn to church sources (from the clergy and laity of the UGCC) on the relevant issues, which have been made public in recent months. Time will tell which of them will be included or reflected in officially approved church documents in the future.

Our foremost interest is in the thoughts of the Head of the UGCC about war and peace, struggle and victory, which are quite convenient to study since His Beatitude Sviatoslav publishes them almost every day. Thoughts of the military chaplains of this Church, who base

² Анатолій Бабинський, “Дещо про ватиканську позицію ‘безсторонності.’” *Релігійно-інформаційна служба України*. [Anatoliy Babyns'kii. “Something about the Vatican position of ‘impartiality.’” *Religious Information Service of Ukraine*]. https://risu.ua/deshcho-pro-vatikansku-poziciyu-bezstoronnosti_n128459. Accessed 16.11.2022.

³ Aleksandr Sagan,; Galina Sagan,; Ivan Harat, “Military Chaplaincy in Independent Ukraine: Problematic Questions of Development and Stages of Formation.” *Orientalia Christiana Periodica*. Commentarii de Re Orientali: Roma. Nr.2 /2021. P. 495-513. Accessed 16.11.2022.

⁴ Ольга Недавнія, “Трансформації в Українській Греко-Католицькій Церкві у період війни (за 2014-2022 роки).” *Київські філософські студії*. (Київ: Київський універ-т ім.Б.Грінченка 2022). сс. 234-239. [Olga Nedavnya, “Transformations in the Ukrainian Greek-Catholic Church during the war (2014-2022).” *Kyiv Philosophical Studies*]. https://iff.kubg.edu.ua/images/stories/Departaments/kaf_f/KFS-2022/%D0%97%D0%B1%D1%96%D1%80%D0%BA%D0%B0_%D0%9A%D0%A4%D0%A12022.pdf. Accessed 16.11.2022.

⁵ Ihor Lutsan and Iryna Horokholinska. “Clergy Social Activity During War Conditions: The Case of Western Regions of Ukraine.” *Occasional Papers on Religion in Eastern Europe*: Vol. 42: Iss. 8, Article 4. <https://digitalcommons.georgefox.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=2390&context=ree>. Accessed 15.11.2022.

their theoretical reflections on practical activities among the military, are also valuable. It is also appropriate to analyze the reflections on this topic of popular bloggers-priests, who have a wide, and mostly young, active and thirsty audience for relevant spiritual guidelines, with which they energetically communicate in feedback. It is also necessary to study the opinions of active members of the UGCC, who share them in the information space, and to consider the content of discussions of clergymen and laymen in social networks, where issues of war and peace are passionately discussed. After all, all this material contains evidence of how the modern Ukrainian situation calls for changes in the perception of reality and in its religious-spiritual, theological assessments, with intent to transform the corresponding activity.

Since the listed sources are constantly expanding, one researcher in a separate article can only begin her analysis, choosing those of them, which, in her opinion, represent the most significant and acutely relevant accents. At the moment we focus on such diverse material, which is probably the most accessible to all those interested in getting to know it, and it is this material that allows prompt reactions, comparisons, and discussions, so it begins to "work" earlier than fundamental theological works and refined and established future theological church documents. Of course, we approach the acquaintance with the selected sources with our competence of a secular (not theological) researcher of religions and corresponding interest, in the hope of later seeing assessments of the modern development of theology about the challenges of war by church researchers.

Main Part

Let us first turn to the opinions of the Head of the UGCC, His Beatitude Sviatoslav. By mid-September 2022, more than two hundred of his thematic videos addressing war topics alone were made public,⁶ and they and other forms of his theological reflections,⁷ in our opinion, are the material that should form the basis of additions and clarifications not only of the social guidelines of the UGCC, but also of the entire Catholic social teaching—and, ideally,

⁶ Матеріали по темі “Щоденні воєнні звернення Глави УГКЦ.” *Українська Греко-Католицька Церква*. [Materials on the topic “Daily war addresses of the Head of the UGCC”. *Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church*]. <https://ugcc.ua/data/tag/%D0%A9%D0%BE%D0%B4%D0%B5%D0%BD%D0%BD%D1%96%20%D0%B2%D0%BE%D1%94%D0%BD%D0%BD%D1%96%20%D0%B7%D0%B2%D0%B5%D1%80%D0%BD%D0%B5%D0%BD%D0%BD%D1%8F%20%D0%93%D0%BB%D0%B0%D0%B2%D0%B8%20%D0%A3%D0%93%D0%9A%D0%A6/>. Accessed 15.11.2022.

⁷ Матеріали по темі “Блаженніший Святослав Шевчук”. *Українська Греко-Католицька Церква*. [Materials on the topic “Blessed Sviatoslav Shevchuk”. *Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church*]. <https://ugcc.ua/data/tag/%D0%91%D0%BB%D0%B0%D0%B6%D0%B5%D0%BD%D0%BD%D1%96%D1%88%D0%B8%D0%B9%20%D0%A1%D0%B2%D1%8F%D1%82%D0%BE%D1%81%D0%BB%D0%B0%D0%B2%20%D0%A8%D0%B5%D0%B2%D1%87%D1%83%D0%BA/>. Accessed 15.11.2022.

to be used in the refinement of social doctrines and catechisms of many Christian Churches. Within the framework of a separate article, it is not even possible to simply list the titles of this work of His Beatitude Sviatoslav. Therefore, we highlight from it those theological accents (transmitting them in essence), which are the most important in view of the interests of the Ukrainian state and, in our opinion, are most needed right now:

- “Russian World” is a pseudo-Christian ideology that threatens both Ukraine and other countries and hinders Ukraine's European integration efforts. It is an ideology of sin, part of Russia's military aggression.
- Ukrainians are fulfilling their mission—stopping the “Russian World” ideology from consuming the world; God blesses the Ukrainian army.
- Christian patriotism is love for one's Motherland, and it must be especially active.⁸
- True peace is not achieved by compromises; in order to be reliable, peace must be just.
- Those who receive and help refugees, as well as the displaced persons themselves, are likened to biblical characters. Refugees are encouraged not only to survive their situation with dignity, but also to return to Ukraine, for whomever and whenever it is possible.
- Victory over the enemy, as well as victory over sin, is generally achieved by good deeds, even small, everyday ones.
- In dark and scary times, Christian optimism is even more necessary.

This list is incomplete because it is constantly expanding. The theological accents proposed by His Beatitude Sviatoslav are specific, relating to the "here and now" situation. This is precisely their special value, which fundamental, general Christian instructions lack. These instructions were written for a principled assessment of phenomena and can neither take into account all the specifics of social events at all times and among all peoples, nor contain explanations and realistic instructions for all modern problems. Therefore, the Head of the UGCC, deploying the doctrinal theological instructions (in particular, those set forth in the Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Catholic Church), very correctly develops theological research “in hot pursuit,” which he immediately makes public, and they are a kind of a “project” of the “catechism” submitted for open adaptation during the war for all Ukrainians, and even more widely for all people of good will.

⁸ Глава УГКЦ: “Я горджуся українськими патріотами, які без найменшої краплі ненависті готові захищати своє.” *Релігійно-інформаційна служба України*. [Head of the UGCC: “I am proud of Ukrainian patriots who are ready to defend their own without the slightest drop of hatred.” *Religious Information Service of Ukraine*]. https://risu.ua/gordzhysya-ukrayinskimi-patriotami-yaki-bez-najmenshoyi-krapli-nenavisti-gotovi-zahishchati-svoye---patriarh-svyatoslav_n131213. Accessed 15.11.2022.

In this thematic research, we are no less interested in the work of military chaplains of the UGCC. Among those who publicize their theological reflections, perhaps the most notable is a Ukrainian Jesuit Andriy Zelinskii, an intellectual with a modern philosophical (in the USA), theological (in Rome) and political science (in Ukraine – Kyiv Mohyla Academy) education, who is deputy head of the Department of Military Chaplaincy of the Patriarchal Curia UGCC. He became a military chaplain at the beginning of Russia's military aggression against Ukraine in 2014, so his theological reflections on the challenges of war are based on a rich practice of personal experience of them and intensive communication with Ukrainian soldiers. The reflections from 2018, the name of which has already become a slogan--“We live in a time when a warrior must be born in the heart of every Ukrainian,”⁹--are a certain manifesto of Fr. Andriy's position regarding these challenges, which echo the spirit of righteous Christian knights. These and more of his published reflections can be divided into quotations in the total volume of a lengthy article; however, in this study, we consider it necessary to cite at least one complete fragment, where topical theological accents are clearly placed:

There is no criticism of military service in the Gospel. Jesus helps the military men, never reproaching them for their profession, because in essence their activity is a sacrificial service to their people. It is the defense of order that makes human life possible. After all, Jesus says, there is no greater love than to lay down one's life for one's friends. A Ukrainian warrior protects his people and his country from a foreign aggressor and people who illegally took up arms and became a threat to peace and justice. There is no other form of protection in this case. All countries in the world have their own army and have it for the same purpose. It is a matter of legitimate protection to which every state has the right. In the case of military aggression, every citizen has not only the right, but also the duty to protect life and peace in his native land.¹⁰

This cruel February 2022, with the active participation of A. Zelinskii, a short collection of principles of Christian teaching regarding the moral aspects of military service in wartime was prepared in the Department of Military Chaplaincy of the Patriarchal Curia of the UGCC – “Catechism of the Christian Soldier.”¹¹ This is a concise and at the same time very rich

⁹ Капелан Андрій Зелінський: Ми живемо в час, коли в серці кожного українця має народитися воїн. *Internet archive WaybackMachine*. [Chaplain Andriy Zelinskii: We live in a time when a warrior should be born in the heart of every Ukrainian. *Internet archive WaybackMachine*]. <https://web.archive.org/web/20220124025951/https://vybory.pravda.com.ua/articles/2018/10/31/7149775/>. Accessed 15.11.2022.

¹⁰ Капелан Андрій Зелінський: “Ми живемо в час, коли в серці кожного українця має народитися воїн.” *Internet archive WaybackMachine*. [Chaplain Andriy Zelinskii: We live in a time when a warrior should be born in the heart of every Ukrainian. *Internet archive WaybackMachine*]. <https://web.archive.org/web/20220124025951/https://vybory.pravda.com.ua/articles/2018/10/31/7149775/>. Accessed 15.11.2022.

¹¹ “Катехизм християнського воїна” – збірник засад християнського вчення стосовно моральних аспектів військової служби в умовах війни. *Патріарша катехитична комісія. Українська Греко-Католицька*

selection of the truths of faith with accents and instructions for today's defenders of Ukraine, the citation and analysis of which is worth a separate article (which we plan to do). Instead, let us at least selectively emphasize the topical, modern and inspiring advice for wartime that is placed in Catechism:

In scary times, when chaos and fear surround peace and quiet, only the light of hope can dispel the darkness. Do not allow confusion and anxiety to sow the gloom of despair in your heart. God is with us when we are with God. Therefore, do not stop believing in the final victory of Good... When fear begins to overcome your beliefs and permeate your body and soul, do not give up: think about everyone you love and those who love you. No matter what happens around you, you will always be remembered by those for whom you are the best and most precious in this world! Do not forget about the weak in spirit, about those who need your support... Feel the responsibility for your fellow man. Never lose your sense of humor. No matter how terrible the threat seems, your wise humor will make it disappear... Be faithful: to the military oath, to relatives and loved ones, to parents and children, to God and to Ukraine. No matter how dark the night, dawn is always inevitable!¹²

Father Andriy was and is in great demand among journalists and educators as a lecturer and speaker. He actively uses a democratic, popular, and convenient way of conveying his thoughts to an interested audience through the international social network Facebook, the advantage of which is the possibility of publishing meaningful texts and commenting on them. In his Facebook content, as well as in the author's explorations, interviews and lectures published in various other mass media and platforms, Fr. Andriy offers an intellectual theological view on acutely relevant topics. During the intensification of Russia's military offensive from February 2022, he emphasized a number of theological accents important for successfully resisting the enemy's onslaught. Among them, in particular, there are: the tradition of the Ukrainian Church, expressed as “God in the midst of the city” (the Church in the service of the community and not of the ruling elite, church units as volunteer centers and shelters), the necessity of the expression of faith in good deeds that bring victory closer, the special value of hope in times of pain and trials, etc.¹³

Церква. [“Catechism of the christian warrior” – collection of the principles of Christian teaching regarding the moral aspects of military service in the conditions of war. *Patriarchal Catechetical Commission. Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church*]. <https://ct.ugcc.ua/catechism/catechism-books/40217>. Accessed 15.11.2022.

¹² “Катехизм християнського воїна” – збірник засад християнського вчення стосовно моральних аспектів військової служби в умовах війни. *Патріарша катехитична комісія. Українська Греко-Католицька Церква*. [“Catechism of the christian warrior” – collection of the principles of Christian teaching regarding the moral aspects of military service in the conditions of war. *Patriarchal Catechetical Commission. Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church*]. <https://ct.ugcc.ua/catechism/catechism-books/40217>. Accessed 15.11.2022.

¹³ Відомий капелан розповів про Благовіщення в умовах війни. *Релігійно-інформаційна служба України*. [A famous chaplain spoke about the Annunciation in the conditions of war. *Religious and Information Service of Ukraine*]. https://risu.ua/vidomij-kapelan-rozpoviv-pro-blagovishchennya-v-umovah-vijni_n128098. Accessed 15.11.2022; Я знаю, який вигляд може мати наша поразка – це “русский мир” під українським прапором. *Релігійно-інформаційна служба України*. [I know what our defeat can look like – it is “Russian World” under

It is quite difficult to determine who is currently the most popular in his theological reflections among the bloggers of the UGCC, since the ratings can change every day, but probably one of the most famous and visited is Padre Serge (Serzh) with his YouTube channel (the number of views on which reaches more than 30,000). From the beginning of the full-scale offensive of Russia, this Redemptorist-Ukrainian patriot, creative speaker and evangelist published more than eight dozen videos, which are lively and interestedly discussed in dozens and hundreds of comments. The possibility of feedback is very valuable both for the author of theological reflections himself, as well as for the listeners, who in this way can not only get acquainted with the spiritual reflections of the authority, but also question him on certain topics, discuss, offer their thoughts and issues desired for conversations, etc.

His videos, dedicated to the challenges of war, struggle, resistance, survival in their religious and spiritual dimensions, attract special attention because they casually and wittily appeal to our contemporaries in their specific situation, and fuel not only Christian hope, but also mobilize for things, equally useful for both Christians and all citizens of Ukraine. The most appropriate sample is the video “Priest in a surrounded city or why they don't break us.”¹⁴ In it, Fr. Serzh emphasizes the God-ordained foundations of Ukrainian patriotism, the valuable traditions of the UGCC as heirs of the Kyiv Church, and the teaching example of the mentors of today's generation of Greek Catholics (clergy and laymen), mentors who sacrificially endured under the murderous oppression of the Soviet Union; and all this is the powerful legacy that gives our contemporaries strength and inspiration to defeat the aggressor. Also, in our opinion, it is important that the priest-blogger repeatedly expresses the opinion that believers, and especially Christians, can and even should hold on to optimism, not to give up the joys of life even in extremely difficult life circumstances, because that is exactly what the enemy wants: mostly to take away life, or at least to subjugate, humiliate, and destroy the very taste of life. Instead, according to Father Serzh, “The path to joy is the path to holiness.”¹⁵

the Ukrainian flag. *Religious and Information Service of Ukraine*]. https://risu.ua/ya-znayu-yakij-viglyad-mozhe-mati-nasha-porazka—se-russkij-mir-pid-ukrayinskim-praporom_n130190. Accessed 15.11.2022.

¹⁴ “Священик в оточеному місті чи чому їм нас не зламати.” *Падре Серж. YouTube*. [A priest in a surrounded city or why they don't break us. *Padre Serge. YouTube*]. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BYaVJifOWtE&ab_channel=%D0%9F%D0%B0%D0%B4%D1%80%D0%B5%D0%A1%D0%B5%D1%80%D0%B6. Accessed 15.11.2022.

¹⁵ Життя переможе! *Падре Серж. YouTube*. [Life will win! *Padre Serge. YouTube*]. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ma8GtiIY7yM&ab_channel=%D0%9F%D0%B0%D0%B4%D1%80%D0%B5%D0%A1%D0%B5%D1%80%D0%B6. Accessed 15.11.2022; Що робитимеш після війни? *Падре Серж. YouTube*. [What will you do after the war? *Padre Serge. YouTube*]. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=V-PWVlqTGBA&ab_channel=%D0%9F%D0%B0%D0%B4%D1%80%D0%B5%D0%A1%D0%B5%D1%80%D0%B6. Accessed 15.11.2022.

Laypeople in the UGCC also take one or another part in research and discussions of theological topics, and these are scientists of theological institutions of this Church (primarily the Ukrainian Catholic University), as well as secular institutes, who are the authors of dozens of works on the relevant articles in such magazines, as “Christian and the World,” “Patriarchate,” various electronic publications, etc. Undoubtedly, new studies are being written now—theological explorations from the experience of the last months of full-scale war. And it is already possible to analyze the material that quickly appeared.

Thus, among the influential laymen of the UGCC, authors of theological reflections, we drew attention to the pro-rector of the Ukrainian Catholic University Myroslav Marynovych, known (in the context of theological approaches), in particular, for his balanced peacefulness and moderation. After all, as it seems, the current situation prompted him, in his characteristically tolerant and balanced style, to propose requests to the theological voice of religious authorities in solidarity with the resolute Ukrainian public, thirsty for words of truth from these authorities. For example, regarding the voice of Pope Francis, M. Marynovych thinks that “Our shared experience... should be included in one coherent message of His Holiness to the faithful people all over the world, in which the language of faith would finally prevail over the language of diplomacy. This should be a text that will stand the test of conscience on the graves of the innocently murdered, in the hearts of the raped and mutilated, in the souls of those who ‘gave their lives for their friends.’” In order to create it, it would be necessary to “come to the place where God cries... and write it together with those who came from the great grief and washed their clothes...”¹⁶

As for the content of the discussions of active representatives of the UGCC in social networks, using the example of Facebook, it can be noted that the degree of theological polemics regarding modern issues of war and peace, losses and victories has increased as expected during the last months of the full-scale military offensive of Russia. The most characteristic are discussions about righteous anger and hatred of enemies, revenge and forgiveness. The dynamics and directions of evolution of such discussions are indicative: while turning to authoritative theological sources (primarily the Holy Scriptures) and authoritative clerics, the disputants move from abstract reflections on peace and the expected search for religious and spiritual support for resistance, survival, and struggle to a discussion of the possibilities of finding one's own and neighbors' spiritual balance, and to the identification of

¹⁶ Мирослав Маринович, “Іти туди, де Бог плаче.” *Релігійно-інформаційна служба України*. [Myroslav Marynovych, “Go to where God cries.” *Religious and Information Service of Ukraine*]. https://risu.ua/iti-tudi-de-bog-plache_n128404. Accessed 15.11.2022.

conditions, ways, and forms of personal participation in achieving victory as a guarantee of a just peace, which, therefore, is God-pleasing and hoped for as a reliable peace.

Conclusions

In conclusion, it can be noted that:

- During Russia's war against Ukraine, theological reflections and discussions were intensified within the UGCC, starting with its Head and reaching the laity, and they are quickly made public and discussed with interest;
- The military theme in these theological reflections has become very saturated, and it expands from theoretical foundations to specific questions that arise from the practice of war among both the military and the civilian population;
- Theological issues of the value of peace are rightly complemented by issues of achieving and protecting a just peace, and issues of the value, necessity, and divine inspiration of effective patriotism;
- The “Russian World” concept is defined by the ideology of Russian chauvinism and imperialism and the justification of war, and the mission of Ukrainians is to protect both their territories and souls, as well as Europe and the entire civilized world, without which neither Ukraine's European integration efforts nor world security are possible;
- The entire experience of the UGCC theological studies and actions in the circumstances of armed aggression is used; the importance of the traditions of the “Kyiv Church” that are helpful for resistance to enemies and one's own spiritual stability and development, even in adverse and difficult conditions, is emphasized;
- The value of Christian optimism is emphasized.

Since the war is still ongoing, and the source material that illuminates the relevant theological reflections of the factors of the UGCC is actively arriving, scholars have a huge field of subject research. In particular, it is worth looking carefully at all the theological documents that relate to war topics and which are governed by the UGCC, compare them with the existing body of theological work of other Churches and note what is newly emerging in this area, how the theoretical guidelines on this topic and the practical actions of the Churches are correlated and how this is taken into account in the UGCC in its interaction with other Churches. Also, over time, it will be important to analyze which additions from the current theological investigations will be included in the documents officially approved by the UGCC.

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