



Moscow Patriarch prays for Russia, Ukraine, entire historic Rus in New Year sermon

“We are going through a knotty stage of our life today,” he said in a speech after a special sermon ‘for the secular New Year’.

“Let’s pray for our fatherland and for all our people,” His Holiness said. “Let’s pray with particular persistence for an end to feuds in the swathes of the historic Rus, for an end to bloodletting, and for the establishment of justice and fairness because only then can peace raise the upper hand.”

“All the imbalances that bring about suffering come from our inability to live in accordance with God’s will,” Kirill I said. “The Lord has empowered humans to live the fullness of life, to live in what we know as happiness and He will lead us through any harsh trials in response to our faithfulness.”

Sermons for the ‘secular New Year’ are held on December 31 and January 1 in all the churches reporting to Moscow Patriarchate. In Moscow, at least ten churches will have overnight vigil services beginning at 00:00 hours on January 1.

As nighttime vigil services and vespers are enjoying an ever greater popularity in Russia, the number of churches that organize them on New Year’s night is increasing, too.

Under the canon of the Eastern Orthodox Church, the secular New Year begins on September 14.

Traditionally, the Russian Church has overnight vigil services on Christmas and on the Easter, which it marks under the Julian calendar.