



## **Patriarch Kirill alarmed by attempts to create the local Church in Ukraine**

“Also alarming are the ever increasing attacks on the Church, including forced handover of churches to schismatics, forced conversion into non-canonical entities or building, along with them and the Greek Catholics, of some “the local Church” as if Ukraine did not have one already,” the patriarch said at an Eparchial meeting in Moscow.

He urged the clergy to pay attention to their words, “be mindful that these words can be a drop of oil in the fire of the feud on the Ukrainian land.”

“Let us think and pray how to find words filled with Christian love for those who suffer from the atrocities of war and for those who, without being asked, are called up to the army, on the ground of their soldier’s duty. In this fratricidal war, both victors and losers, the dead and survivors are victims because they have seen the horrors of death and homicide,” he said.

He also recalled that he had earlier blessed a Moscow initiative to raise funds for Donbas refugees, saying that a total of 57.65 million rubles have been raised to date.

“Unfortunately, my visit to the Ukrainian land failed to take place in 2014 because of the current military and political situation. I hereby attest that the Russian Orthodox Church, which embraces the people of Russia and Ukraine and is driven by pastoral responsibility, is ready to do all it can to restore the fraternal, neighborly relations filled with mutual respect between Russia and Ukraine,” Patriarch Kirill added.

All Russian churches end their liturgy services with a prayer for the end to the feud in Ukraine, he said.