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In Sunday sermon, top Orthodox bishop Kirill backs Russia's war against Ukraine

Tuesday 8 March 2022, by [ZOMPA Tenzin](#) (Date first published: 7 March 2022).

Critics call him a 'militant Christian'. He has accused West of organising genocides against countries that do not support gay rights.

Russian Orthodox bishop Kirill, the Patriarch of Moscow, has endorsed Russian President Vladimir Putin's narrative on Ukraine in a sermon Sunday.

The bishop was speaking at the occasion of "Forgiveness Sunday" in remembrance of "Adam's exile" at the Cathedral Church of Christ the Savior in Moscow when he backed the war on Ukraine.

Many shared short clips of his sermon on Twitter and criticised him for endorsing "Putin's narrative on Ukraine". While some pointed out that Kirill has accused the West of organising genocide campaigns against countries that refused to stage gay parades, others called him a "militant Christian".

The Wall Street Journal correspondent Matthew Luxmoore wrote, "Russian Orthodox Patriarch Kirill unsurprisingly endorsing Putin's narrative on Ukraine in a sermon today. According to him the West essentially organises genocide campaigns against countries that refuse to stage gay parades".

Russian Orthodox Patriarch Kirill unsurprisingly endorsing Putin's narrative on Ukraine in a sermon today. According to him the West essentially organises genocide campaigns against countries that refuse to stage gay parades pic.twitter.com/mXc89tXj4m

— Matthew Luxmoore (@mjluxmoore) [March 6, 2022](#)

"Hard to tell this militant Christian apart from the militant Christians in the US," wrote another user.

Hard to tell this militant Christian apart from the militant Christians in the US: <https://t.co/lmU6bidHdv>

— Seldon Crisis Log (@rGiskard_R) [March 6, 2022](#)

Hey, [@WAD_ROCOR](#) - is this a stance you support? Do you believe folks in [#Ukraine](#) deserve to be invaded & murdered because they don't violently suppress [#LGBTQIA](#) folks like Putin's Russia does? Just curious. Seems like something you may want to be clear about. <https://t.co/Xj6SJOUfn7>

— M. Belanger (@sethanikeem) [March 7, 2022](#)

Last week, more than 275 Russian Orthodox priests, including Kirill, wrote a letter opposing Russia's invasion of Ukraine and called for the people of Ukraine to make their decision. However, Patriarch Kirill of Moscow, a close ally of Putin, who once characterised his leadership as "a miracle of God", has been more supportive of Russia's stance.

Earlier in February, while Kirill pleaded to all military forces to "avoid civilian casualties", he stressed more on the need to "overcome divisions" between Russian and Ukrainian people. His controversial remarks have even led many leaders of the independent Orthodox Christian Church to call him today's Hitler. "This was Hitler during World War II. This is what Putin has become today," wrote Metropolitan Epiphanius I of Ukraine, leader of the independent Orthodox Christian Church based in Kyiv.

The rift within the Russian church began in 2019 when the Orthodox faithful in Ukraine led by Patriarch Bartholomew I, the Greek Orthodox primate, defied the Kirill-headed Orthodox Patriarchate in Russia and installed a new orthodox body in Ukraine. While the Orthodox Church of Constantinople recognised the independent Ukrainian Orthodox Church, the Russian Orthodox still refused to acknowledge it.

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