

## **UGCC Patriarch suggests using 75th anniversary of Volyn tragedy for dialogue and reconciliation**

### **Culture**

Posted by:

Posted on : 2018/6/15 22:59:21

**"I invite politicians, said Patriarch Sviatoslav, to joint celebration of jubilees associated with positive memory, to unite us, to help heal wounds and build a better future. Do not turn into hostages of the tragic past. Promote the things that create, not destroy."**

From RISU, June 13, 2018 "I had a sincere and warm meeting with the Polish intelligentsia in Wrocław. Some talked with great fear about how the Polish-Ukrainian relations will develop this year. After all, we have important anniversaries: the 75th anniversary of the Volyn massacre and the 100th anniversary of the revival and independence of both Poland and Ukraine. Unfortunately, this led to the Polish-Ukrainian war in the twentieth century," Patriarch Sviatoslav (Shevchuk), was reported as saying this in an interview with the Polish Catholic Information Agency, the Department of Information of the UGCC reported. The head of the UGCC said that he took part in the ceremony of award named after Jan Nowak-Jeziorański, which this year was conferred on a prominent Israeli politician, Shevach Weiss. "A lot was said about Polish-Jewish relations. I came to the conclusion that between them and the Polish-Ukrainian relations there are many similar ... Reconciliation is a process in which we experience the best and worst periods. Shevach Weiss said, in particular, when countries have lived side by side for so many centuries, conflicts are inevitable, especially during the war," said Patriarch Sviatoslav, adding that, while living in peacetime, we must do our utmost to not reach conflicts, but to heal wounds inflicted earlier. The first superior reminded Weiss's statement that jubilees were invented by politicians, but only in order to contrast views in society. It is unacceptable. His Beatitude Sviatoslav said he "would like to take advantage of the future jubilees for dialogue and reconciliation, not as an opportunity to nourish negative memory." "First of all, you need to cherish the positive memory. For example, why do we not celebrate the anniversary of the Miracle of the Vistula in 1920, the great solidarity of the Poles and Ukrainians during the Orange Revolution, or the 40th anniversary of the election of John Paul II to the Apostolic See of the Pope, who has done so much for our relations?" the religious leader of the Greek Catholics said. "Therefore, I invite politicians, said His Beatitude Sviatoslav, to joint celebration of jubilees associated with positive memory, to unite us, to help heal wounds and build a better future. Do not turn into hostages of the tragic past. Promote the things that create, not destroy." In addition, he said, the dialogue always cures wounds and manifests itself in particular steps, inspired primarily by the Gospel, that is, a prayer that does not blame anyone, but covers the victims of both sides. Wound healing occurs in trifles, such as, for example, daily assistance to a Ukrainian migrant ... "We will initiate meetings of Polish and Ukrainian youth, as it was the case during the World Youth Day in Krakow in 2016. Or, let's arrange together neglected cemeteries in many places, both on Polish and on the Ukrainian side," said the head of the UGCC.

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\*The article above appears through courtesy of the Religious Information Service of Ukraine.  
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