

Dear readers!

The religious factor occupies an important place in the socio-political and spiritual-cultural life of the modern world. The scientific reflection on the role of religion in today's spiritual-cultural and socio-political transformations in the Ukrainian multi-denominational society has a strong scientific basis. It covers a wide range of social, socio-political, cultural, legal, ethical problems in the direction of rethinking the relationship between the church and the state, secular society and religious institutions in the context of European integration, globalization, secularization. Global challenges for religious organizations caused by the full-scale Russian invasion, which led to a change in the Ukrainian religious landscape and directions of inter-religious and socio-political interaction of the domestic religious leadership, became the latest and most relevant aspect of this scientific reflection.

The authors of the "**Religious Factor in the Social Transformations of Today**" issue also contribute to rethinking the key religious and political problems of our time, significantly correcting the currently existing ideas about various aspects and relationships of religious and socio-political institutions; changes taking place in the concept of the "national church" against the background of the Russian-Ukrainian war. The threat of the loss of national identity united Ukrainian society, which, regardless of religious affiliation, acted as a whole organism in defense of the common values of freedom, sovereignty, and territorial integrity of Ukraine. Panoramically and retrospectively comprehending the value phenomena of humanity in the context of global challenges of today for Ukrainian society and its religious institutions, such as human dignity, sociality, social cohesion, patriotism, the authors of the issue record and proclaim a new era in the emergence of fundamental social norms and values. Our authors' articulation of the problems of bioethics and anthropocentrism is also strong and scientifically based.

The relationship between religion and law in the aspect of ensuring the realization of religious rights and freedoms is investigated by **Oleg Buchma**. Determining the relationship between the norms of international, European, and national law and their role in ensuring and protecting religious rights and freedoms, he concludes that democracy as a key form of organization of modern societies operates the most effective legal toolkit for guarantees, ensuring the implementation and protection of religious rights and freedoms, and restoring the value of the religious-legal connection. The author divides the organizational, normative, procedural and other obstacles that prevent the realization of religious rights and freedoms in Ukraine into external (full-scale war with the Russian Federation) and internal (insufficient institutional capacity of executive authorities; low level of effectiveness of reforming the judicial branch of government; high level of corruption; politicization of the legal space and the preference of political expediency and populist slogans over the rule of law and the rule of law; conflicts of legislation, etc.) ones, thus outlining the levels of the legal field (international, European, national (Ukrainian)) and ways of solv-

ing (establishing inter-church dialogue and dialogue between the state and the church) specified difficulties.

The publication of **Anatoli Kolodnyi and Liudmyla Fylypovych** is dedicated to the monitoring of state-confessional relations during the Russian-Ukrainian war of 2014-2022. They state the restructuring of the Ukrainian religious landscape and the mass emigration of Ukrainian believers of various faiths as a result of the illegal forceful occupation of part of the territory of our state. On the basis of data from open sources, the researchers show the position of the most influential denominations in Ukraine and their leaders regarding the Russian-Ukrainian war, justifying that a clear position of the state regarding the form of relations with different denominations should be announced in state-denominational relations in the country now more than ever. In this context, they consider the state re-registration of all religious structures of Ukraine to be relevant, taking into account their social orientations and the nature of connections with foreign religious centers, the creation of a public Scientific Expert Council on Security in the Humanitarian Field. In order to protect the national informational and spiritual space, state bodies should study the denominational periodicals of Ukraine and printed products imported from abroad for distribution among Ukrainian believers. According to the authors of the article, the state should initiate changes to the current Law on Freedom of Conscience and Religious Organizations, related to the formulation of the principle of separation of the Church from the state and school, as well as the establishment of punishments for religious activities that harm the national and state security of the Ukrainian people.

The role of the religious factor in the formation of solidarity and social cohesion in modern Ukraine is clarified by **Iryna Kondratieva and Iryna Fenno**. For this, they use data from national sociological surveys obtained during peak periods of social crises, based on the fact that it is during such periods that social subjects demonstrate an extremely high level of social cohesion, solidarity and readiness for self-sacrifice for the protection of common values. The authors describe the very experience of the transition from the USSR and gaining independence by Ukraine as a process of changing the types of solidarity from "mechanical" to "organic" one (E. Durkheim). They show the religious factor as an important social factor influencing the social cohesion of society in general and in Ukraine in particular and justify the presence here of an "organic" type of solidarity that unites Ukrainians in the protection of common values of freedom, sovereignty, territorial integrity of Ukraine, human dignity and identity. Emphasizing the sociological indicators of religious pluralism, the level of religious tolerance, the level of trust in religion, the authors conclude that religious organizations in Ukraine are active and equal subjects of civil society, which influenced and influence the formation of public attitudes and positions, and therefore social cohesion and solidarity in society.

Hanna Kulahina-Stadnichenko draws attention to the problem of human dignity as the basis of civilizational coexistence of subjects of different religious and secular beliefs. Relying on the religious principles of tolerance, non-involvement and objectivity, she examines human dignity in its theological connotations in view of the challenges of modern Ukrainian realities. Based on the generalization of theoretical material and the statements of religious leaders of various denominations, the author concludes that in the conditions of the impossibility of political dialogue and reconciliation with the Russian aggressor, the idea of interreligious dialogue needs urgent reconstruction, in particular, a direct answer to the question of whether such a dialogue can be the mission of the Church, conducted by it at the price of truth and, at the same time, indulge human dignity.

Key models of military chaplaincy in various armies of the world, as well as the genesis of this phenomenon in Ukraine, were analyzed by **Iryna Lomachynska**. Comparing different models of chaplaincy, the author shows that in the national context, the formation of the institution of military chaplaincy is due to the manifestations of the national liberation movement in the conditions of war threats, and the image of the chaplain has signs of not only a spiritual, but also a deeply patriotic personality. The peculiarities of the involvement of the positive world experience of military chaplaincy were analyzed, the main directions of the work of religious organizations in military structures were highlighted, it was established that the complexity of globalization challenges facing the Ukrainian state and its Armed Forces require military chaplains not only to perform cult and religious functions, but, above all, to ensure high the moral qualities of military personnel, the formation of the civil duty to protect the state, the formation of the spirit of patriotism, brotherhood and mutual respect.

Changes in the Orthodox world caused by Russia's military invasion of Ukraine in February 2022 are analyzed by **Evgeniy Deinega**. He focuses attention on the geographical location of Ukraine at the crossroads of East and West, on the historical context of existing connections between the Russian and Ukrainian churches, examines the meaning of the concept of "canonical territory" as well as the attitude of former empires to lost territories. This allows him to compare the positions and ideas of the Russian Federation regarding the spiritual environment of Ukraine with the real self-perception of the Ukrainian clergy and believers, to critically evaluate the rhetoric of the highest church leadership of Russia at the beginning of the military intervention, as well as the reaction to it of representatives of the local church and congregation. The author also pays attention to the reaction of foreign churches to the events in Ukraine and highlights the problem of the transition of Ukrainian dioceses to the jurisdiction of the Russian Orthodox Church in the occupied territories.

The current topic of "post-Soviet Protestantism" and its positioning in relation to the Russian aggression against Ukraine is raised by **Pavlo Pavlenko** in his research. Showing that the Russocentrism of post-Soviet Protestantism is based on Eurasianism as a doctrine of Russian fas-

cism, which proclaims the ideas of the Russian-Asian commonality in opposition to all others, including the commonality of the Slavs, advocates neo-Stalinism and Putin's neocolonialism, the author compares two concepts of Eurasianism and the "Russian world" which are basic for modern Russian geopolitics. Eurasianism, the author concludes, presupposes the actual inclusion of numerous Protestant movements in the former Soviet territories into the political orbit of the Kremlin with its further "orthodoxization" in the Eurasian format. And while Russian Orthodoxy prefers to subjugate the entire post-Soviet space to the neo-imperial project of "Russian world", envisioning the unification of Slavs in the former Soviet geopolitical coordinates, post-Soviet Protestantism is oriented towards maintaining the post-Soviet space in the Eurasian political field. At the same time, analyzing the structure and internal politics of modern post-Soviet Protestantism, the author proves that, despite all Protestantism's heterogeneity, it has preserved the general features of Soviet-style baptism in a unique way and is prone to the formation of closed structures and subcultures based on rejection rather than positive self-identification.

The specificity of the spiritual practices of Zen Buddhism, which influence the spread of their popularity in the modern Western globalized world, is explored in his article by **Oleksandr Donets**. In particular, he considers the spiritual practices of Zen Buddhism as a way of a person's self-knowledge, "returning to themselves", as a product of their inner spiritual experience. Although these practices cannot be analyzed in the categories of Western rationalism because of their intuitiveness and mysticism, they are very attractive to many people around the world, for whom harmony of thought and action is an important behavioral pattern. The peculiarities of the influence of the spiritual system of Zen Buddhism on Japanese art are analyzed and it is shown that Zen has a unique aesthetic, which includes a high appreciation of moderation, asymmetry, imperfection, simplicity and naturalness. It is simple beauty, simplicity (the transformation of "poverty" into a kind of minimalism) that the Japanese find a special charm and a source of true beauty in.

Oleksandr Horban and Ruslana Martych reflect on the value of life in various manifestations of its materiality in their research. The theoretical basis of their reasoning is the formation of leading philosophical concepts, doctrines, and religious teachings regarding the phenomenon of bioethics. Paying attention to the axiological reflection of the problem of the living in the explorations of ancient philosophers, early Christian discourse, the ethical teaching of I. Kant, the phenomenological direction of philosophical anthropology and in modern philosophical concepts, they group all the variety of points of view into two main approaches: the ethics of the sacredness (sanctity) of life and the ethics of quality life. They substantiate these approaches as allowing the development of bioethical teaching by means of forming moral norms and imperatives of human behavior, as well as establishing limitations of human influence on the ways and forms of existence of the living.

Issue Editors