

**PÜHTITSA JUMALAEMA UINUMISE**  
STAVROPIGIAALNE NAISKLOOSTER

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**Meie: 29.10.2024**

**Nr. 76**

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Lauri Läänemets  
Siseminister  
EV Siseministeerium  
Pikk 61, 15065 Tallinn

Dear Minister Lauri Läänemets!

Hereby we would like to present our position in relation to your insistent demand regarding the possibility of withdrawal of the Pühtitsa Dormition Stauropegic Convent from the jurisdiction of the Moscow Patriarchate as well as our renunciation of the stauropigial status of the Convent.

In accordance with the agreement reached during the meeting on 30 July 2024, we have accepted an obligation to provide our written position no later than the end of August 2024.

In August, we filed a petition to extend this deadline until the end of October 2024. We are grateful to the Ministry for understanding in such an important matter for us.

Thus our position is being submitted in accordance with the agreed deadlines.

The Convent adheres to its previously expressed opinion, that it is neither authorised nor entitled to independently appeal to the Patriarch of Moscow and All Rus' Kirill with a request to withdraw the stauropigial status and transfer the Pühtitsa Dormition Stauropegial Convent into the jurisdiction of Constantinople.

Below, we will attempt to clarify our position as accurately as possible:

1.

We believe that in order to understand our position, one should understand the foundations of the spiritual choice that each person entering the monastery makes.

By taking on monastic vows, a person embarks on the path of monastic life and becomes a member of a spiritual brotherhood (or sisterhood in the case of a convent), having left the world and everything in it to follow Christ. This spiritual community becomes a school of service to the Lord, where individuals, by coming to know themselves and their weaknesses, will discover a need for inner repentance and will grow in the spiritual perfection for which they entered the monastery.

The entire structure of monastic life is directed toward this goal, where unceasing prayer is combined with a particular measure of laborious obedience, that is, the burdens of all ongoing tasks carried out by the monastic inhabitants. The spiritual choice of a novice is a life in Christ and a dedication to serving Him.

The very sacrament of monasticism as well as the monastic vows made to the Lord God (chastity, obedience, and non-possession) preclude nuns from undertaking any arbitrary or unauthorised alterations in their course of life. In this context, the proposed granting of the novices the right to express their will in choosing a jurisdiction directly contradicts both the very concept of monasticism and the vows taken by the nuns, which are based on renunciation (ἀποταγή) of the world.

At the meeting on April 24<sup>th</sup> 2024 in our monastery Minister Läänemets did confirm that the state has no complaints against the activities of the Convent itself. In his explanations, the representative of the ministry repeatedly pointed out that it was the rhetoric of Patriarch Kiril that raised concerns and encouraged the state to take decisive steps in relation to the EOC MP and the Convent. But according to the Book of Life (Ezekiel 18:20.) “The soul that sinneth, it shall die. The son shall not bear the iniquity of the father, neither shall the father bear the iniquity of the son: the righteousness of the righteous shall be upon him, and the wickedness of the wicked shall be upon him.” “The fathers shall not be put to death for the children, neither shall the children be put to death for the fathers: every man shall be put to death for his own sin.” (Deuteronomy 24:16).

In Orthodoxy, the Patriarch is primarily a mortal human being, endowed with specific authority, serving as a kind of temporary leader.

In terms of the Church, all bishops are equal in their rank as priests. The divine service, which is the center of the Church's life, is the same whether it is led by the Patriarch or by a bishop of the smallest and, by human reasoning, most insignificant diocese.

The Orthodox Church does not grant the Patriarch the special authority that the Pope of Rome holds for Catholics — as a guarantor and a guardian of the ecclesiastical truth, who is infallible every time he speaks *ex cathedra*. The Patriarch may indeed be wrong, and not everything he says may necessarily be true. Apostle Paul warned the elders of Ephesus: "Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood. For I know this, that after my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock. Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them. " (Acts 20:28-30). But the Apostle does not call for fleeing the Church; rather, he urges not to believe certain individuals who enter the church assembly but have goals that are entirely different from salvation through following Christ. "*For there shall arise false Christs, and false prophets, and shall shew great signs and wonders; insomuch that, if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect.*" (Matt. 24:24). And if the people of the Church are not doing God's work, their work is useless: "For if this counsel or this work be of men, it will come to nought: But if it be of God, ye cannot overthrow it; lest haply ye be found even to fight against God." (Acts 5:38-39).

With the abundance of sermons, articles and words spoken by the Patriarch in all kinds of gatherings, the Church cannot altogether define his inner disposition of soul as "a predator ruining the Church". At his own discretion he participates amongst others in non-church gatherings of people, speaks there at length, and may as well be mistaken or mislead. The Patriarch, like all other people of the Church, is not immune from falling. However, the Church will not perish due to the fall of individual members.

If the current Patriarch engages in acts contrary to God, those actions will soon be destroyed, and he will cease to be a member of the Church of Christ. In light of this, the Church does not pray to the Patriarch, but rather prays that the Lord Himself guides the Patriarch's heart, ensuring that he does not turn away from God in his inner life. Similarly, the Pühtitsa Monastery prays for the authorities and military of the Republic of Estonia.

If the Patriarch takes the initiative to transfer the Convent into administrative subordination to another Patriarch, it would simply be a change of administration for the Convent. However, the monastery itself cannot write a petition to the Patriarch to withdraw from the Church, as this would be a self-willed withdrawal of the Convent from the circumstances and duties in which the Lord has placed it, essentially a withdrawal from the life in Christ.

## 2.

One of the counterarguments to our position is the reference to the historical events of the last century, when, according to the representatives of the Ministry, the Convent had already shown complete autonomy in his choice of jurisdiction. However, the history of the Pühtitsa Convent does not know any examples of unauthorised change of jurisdiction by the Convent and its nuns. To confirm our words, the Convent turned to Archpriest Igor Prekup, the Information Officer of the Tallinn Diocese. This was not a random choice on our part. Father Igor Prekup is known for his scientific works on the history of the Estonian Orthodox Church. One of these works is the book "Õigeusu probleemid Eestis. Arhimandriit Grigorios D.Papathomase raamatust "Õnnetus olla väike kirik väikesel maal" (Tallinn, 2013. ülempr. Nikolai Balašov, ülempr. Igor Prekup).

Below are excerpts from his historical note dated October 4, 2024, the full text of which is included in the appendix.

The Pühtitsa monastic women community was established by the decision of the Holy Synod of the Orthodox Catholic Greek-Russian Church in 1891. The same year it was inaugurated on the feast of the Dormition of the Mother of God by the ruling bishop of the Riga diocese, Bishop Arseny (Bryantsev). Little by little the churches and other buildings of the Convent were built.

By a decree dated August 19, 1892 the Holy Synod elevated the community to the status of convent of common life for women.

Initially the Convent was part of the Riga Diocese on the territory of the Revel Vicariate. On 30.03.1917 the northern part of the Livonian Governorate was annexed to the Estonian Governorate. Following the territorial and

administrative changes, ecclesiastical territorial changes also occurred: the Revel Vicariate expanded within the same boundaries. On December 31, 1917, the first Estonian bishop, the future holy martyr Platon (Kulbush), was appointed to head it, and he was temporarily entrusted with the administration of the entire Riga diocese. After his murder by the Bolsheviks on 14.01.1919, the church life of the Revel Vicariate was managed by the Provisional Estonian Diocesan Council, which firmly pursued the goal of gaining the autocephaly.

The Supreme Church Administration (the Joint Chamber of the Holy Synod and the Supreme Church Council) of the Moscow Patriarchate responded to the needs of the Orthodox Christians in Estonia by initially establishing an independent Estonian diocese (19.11.1919) on the basis of the Revel Vicariate and then (10.05.1920) granting it autonomous status as the Estonian Orthodox Church.

Thus, during the period described above, the Pühtitsa Monastery was successively part of the Riga Diocese, and then, in 1919, it became part of the newly established Estonian Diocese, which was transformed into an Autonomous Church in 1920. By that time, it had been referred to in internal documents as the "Apostolic Orthodox" for at least a year.

As can be understood from the excerpts above, since the time of its establishment until the 1920s, the change in jurisdiction of the Convent was not initiated by the nuns, but it rather happened due to certain historical changes that have had a direct impact on the entire Estonian Diocese. Since the administrative changes were based on the decision of the Provisional Estonian Diocesan Council for all parishes within the territory of the Revel Vicariate, the Monastery accepted the change of jurisdiction as a decision from the highest authority.

In 1923, the leadership of the Estonian Apostolic Orthodox Church led by Archbishop Alexander (Paulus) petitioned Patriarch Meletius of Constantinople for autocephaly. The Patriarch did not grant autocephaly, but accepted EAO into his jurisdiction, recognising the previously granted autonomous status and justifying the non-canonical character of this transition (the absence of the Letter of Release from the Mother Church) by the ecclesiastical and political turmoil in Russia.

On 30 March 1941 the EAO returned to the Moscow Patriarchate with the Pühtitsa Convent alongside. The justification for the change of jurisdiction is very simple: "On the occasion of Estonia's accession to the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics and the change of the state system, it became necessary to change the general structure of the Orthodox Church of Estonia and to restore the former communion with the Russian Church". It is further noted that "the question of unification with the Church of Moscow was discussed in the Synod and resolved positively" (Appeal of the Synod of the EAO to the Narva Diocese Council dated 25.09.1940 ЭИА.1655. Оп.2. Д.2629. Л.2). And there is not even a hint of the necessity, if only for the sake of propriety, to coordinate this matter with the Patriarch of Constantinople (even if it concerns a return to the Mother Church).

Since Pühtitsa was part of the Tallinn Diocese under the direct administration of Metropolitan Alexander (Paulus), the change of jurisdiction in this case also occurred not by the will of the monastery, but as an execution of an administrative directive issued from above.

Upon the arrival of the Nazi Army, the head of the EAO (at that time, after reunification, it had already been transformed back into the Estonian Diocese), Metropolitan Alexander (Paulus), attempted to remove the entire Church under his guidance from the Baltic Exarchate of the Moscow Patriarchate. However, he was able to achieve this only with the monasteries and parishes of the Tallinn Diocese that were directly subordinate to him. The German occupying authorities, favoring the Baltic Exarchate led by Metropolitan Sergius (Voskresensky), did not allow the structure headed by Metropolitan Alexander to be called a "Church." Instead, they ordered him not to engage in communion with the Patriarchate of Constantinople and mandated that it be referred to as the "Estonian Apostolic Orthodox Metropolia" (EAOM).

Various sources refer to the alleged appeals of the Abbess of the Convent to Metropolitan Alexander to keep the Convent under his omophorion. Therefore, it cannot be viewed as an expressed petition for changing the jurisdiction, but only for maintaining the existing subordination without altering the circumstances and duties in which the Lord had placed it.

On March 6<sup>th</sup> 1945, acting through members of the EAOM Synod (all but one of whom remained in Estonia) the fallout part of the clergy and laity were reunited, after which the transformation of the EAO into the Estonian Diocese (started in 1941) was finally completed. The Pühtitsa **Convent** carried on with its activities as a **diocesan monastery**.

In response to our enquiry to the Legal Department of the Moscow Patriarchate regarding the availability of the letters and appeals of Abbess Ioanna (Korovnikova) to leave the jurisdiction of the Patriarchate of Constantinople or return to the Mother Church, we were informed by the Head of the Department that the archives do not contain such documents. Metropolitan Alexander (Paulus) of Tallinn appealed to Metropolitan Sergius, the Locum Tenens of the Patriarchal See, with a request to return the EOC to the fold of the Orthodox Church of the Moscow Patriarchate.

If the Ministry possesses historical documents that prove different circumstances regarding the change of jurisdiction of Pühtitsa, we kindly request that copies be provided to us for careful examination and preservation in the monastery's archives.

The Pühtitsa Convent had a special relationship with the late Patriarch Alexy II of Moscow and All Russia, who during his tenure as a Bishop of Tallinn and Estonia succeeded in defending the Convent and saving it from closure in the 1960s. His deeply personal pastoral care was manifested in 1990, when after becoming the Patriarch, he almost immediately took Pühtitsa Convent under his direct archpastoral care, removing it from the Estonian Diocese and giving it the status of a Stauropeigial Convent. (Decree No. 1238 of 26.06.1990). It should be noted that the independent Stauropeigial Status of the Convent miraculously anticipated the future independence of the Republic of Estonia.

3.

The word "Stauropigion", literally deriving from the Greek words "cross" and "exaltation", means a HIGH status assigned to church institutions (traditionally, most often monasteries), making them independent of local Diocesan Authority. In Russia, the first stauropigial monastery appeared even before the acquisition of autocephaly. In 1383 it was the Simonov Monastery, subordinate to the Patriarch of Constantinople, who would stay there during his visit to Moscow. In the Russian Orthodox Church the stauropigion was introduced in the middle of the 17th century by Patriarch Nikon, who founded and took control over the New Jerusalem, Valдай and Onega monasteries.

Regarding Pühtitsa, it can be said with confidence that the remarkable revival and transformation of the monastery during the God-fighting era of Khrushchev was made possible by the personal care, support, and involvement of Metropolitan of Tallinn, who later became His Holiness Patriarch Alexy II (Rüdiger). His dedication and active participation played a crucial role in preserving and restoring the monastery, allowing it not only to survive but also to once again become an important spiritual center for Orthodox believers in Estonia, and by whose will the Convent was granted stauropigial status in 1990. This was, we repeat, a **personal initiative** of His Holiness Patriarch Alexy II, a manifestation of his care for the Convent, his fatherly, pastoral concern for the best arrangement of the monastic tenor. Now, more than thirty years later, one can appreciate the wisdom of this decision. The stauropigial status helped the Convent to withstand these difficult times and enabled it to look to the future with confidence.

At the doorstep of the new century and millennium as well as with the acquirement of the stauropegial status, the Convent gained a number of significant advantages, the most important of which is our internal independence. While enjoying our stauropegial status the Convent is freed from the inevitable necessity of having to deal with the affairs of the local diocese. This freedom from the full spectrum of diocesan chores allows the nuns to live a purely prayerful life.

We have been given the freedom to make decisions regarding requests coming from the Moscow Patriarchate. We have the right to independently determine whether to accept and fulfill them or not. The Patriarch has taken on the burden of being merely the spiritual center of the monastery.

The history of the Convent contains multiple examples and confirmations that we, the nuns of a Convent with a stauropigial status, are freed from political and worldly tendencies and, subject to the opinion of the Convent's Spiritual Council, are capable of determining the spiritual meaning of the developments. We make our own choice based on our spiritual experience and discretion. Regardless of whom the request or demand comes from, be it a politician or a clergyman, it is solely up to us whether to fulfil, ignore or categorically reject it.

Here is a number of examples:

- Refusal to participate in the procession in Tallinn, when, at the request of Metropolitan Cornelius (Jacobs), Schema-Abbes Varvara (Trofimova) replied:

"Vladyka, if it were a cathedral prayer, but since it is a political action, we will not participate in it".

- The question of the Convent's Compound. After the death of Schema-Abbes Varvara (Trofimova), the local bishop wished to see the Convent's Compound under the jurisdiction of his Diocese. We categorically disagreed with such a request. As a result, the Compound remained under our jurisdiction, and the bishop was penalised for misleading His Holiness the Patriarch.
- The "Prayer for Victory". Everyone, quite literally everyone, who is interested in this matter, knows that this prayer has never been recited in our Convent. Instead, the Spiritual Council of the Convent decided to recite the prayer for the unity and salvation of all who come to the church.

Everyone who have ever visited the Pühtitsa Convent can testify that the life of Pühtitsa nuns is one of labour and prayer, prayer and labour. The events of the world come to a standstill at the Convent walls.

Being well aware of all the peculiarities of the life of the diocesan monasteries, His Holiness Patriarch ALEXY II granted the stauropigial status to the Pühtitsa - which was his brainchild -and thereby relieved it of many challenges that accompany the life of every diocesan monastery, bestowing the highest status of a first-class stauropigial monastery to our Convent, which has remained exemplary ever since. It should be noted here that the opinion about the petition allegedly made by Schema-Abbess Varvara (Trofimova) regarding the granting of the stauropigial status to our Convent has no substance whatsoever. *In accordance with p. 10, Ch. 4 of the Canonical Statutes of the Russian Orthodox Church, the Patriarch of Moscow and All Rus' governs all church stauropigions. According to par. 3, Ch. 18 of the Canonical Statutes of the Russian Orthodox Church, stauropegial monasteries are proclaimed stauropegial by decision of the Patriarch of Moscow and All Russia and the **Holy Synod in compliance with the canonical procedure, thus the question of granting or abolishing the stauropegial status of a monastery is the exclusive prerogative of the Patriarch of Moscow and All Rus'.***

To arbitrarily renounce the stauropigial status granted by His Holiness Patriarch ALEXY II, whom our predecessor sisters honoured as their own father, while calling our Schema-Abbess Barbara their mother, would mean that we are turning our backs to the eternal memory of those whom the Lord blessed to preserve Pühtitsa. According to the Fifth Commandment of God we shall "*honour thy father and thy mother...*" (Exodus 20: 12). These are our spiritual mentors and people of prayer, whom we cannot and have no right to forget. These are the confessors of the bloodstained 20th century, when the Church was basically destroyed physically. During these terrible atheistic times by the miracle of God they still succeeded in building up both spiritually and materially. We now live and enjoy the fruits of their labours, while you are suggesting that we forget and never remember it altogether!

4.

If one is to honour and observe the Constitution as well the laws in the world, abstaining from violating them in order not to be punished judicially, then it is even more so obligatory for the monastics to fulfil the Statutes of the Church. The Statutes of the Church are based on the canons. The word canon derives from the Greek

κανών (rule, ruler). This concept was used in antiquity to denote a scale that was used in construction for accuracy of measurements as a **standard**. In Orthodoxy, a canon in the broad sense of the word is a certain rule or set of rules formulated by the holy apostles and holy fathers of the Church, the fulfilment of which is obligatory for every Christian, such as the Rules of the Ecumenical Councils.

The canonical structure of the entire Ecumenical Orthodox Church is based on the principle of locality. This means that the Church is spread throughout the world by means of the autocephalous Local Churches, each of which has its own canonical territory in the countries, where the Orthodox Church has historically existed for many centuries. This principle suggests that the territory of one Local Church may be in several countries (for example, the Orthodox Church in the Czech Republic and Slovakia, the Serbian Orthodox Church on the territory of several states, etc.). At the same time, those prayers which are said in the Orthodox worship about local authorities indeed have in mind the authorities in *the host country of* that particular diocese (monastery). This shows that the Pühtitsa Convent has been praying and still prays for the authorities and the army of the Republic of Estonia.

The canonical Statute of the Russian Orthodox Church applies to our Convent in the part that regulates the activities of stauropegion (e.g. paragraph 31 of the Statutes), Stauropegial Monasteries (Chapter XIII of the Statutes) and all canonical subdivisions of the Russian Orthodox Church (without distinguishing their varieties). For example, according to paragraph 10 of the ROC Statutes, canonical subdivisions of the Russian Orthodox Church do not conduct political activities and do not provide their premises for political events. This provision applies to the Pühtitsa Convent.

According to paragraph 18.10 of the Statute of the Russian Orthodox Church, if a monastery arbitrarily takes an illegitimate decision to withdraw from the hierarchical structure and jurisdiction of the Russian Orthodox Church, the monastery shall be deprived of the confirmation of its affiliation with the Russian Orthodox Church, which shall entail the termination of the monastery's operation as a religious entity. This provision of the Statute of the Russian Orthodox Church applies to the Pühtitsa Convent, while according to Article 12 of the Law on Churches and Parishes, the Statute of the monastery shall define the grounds and procedure for the termination of its activities. In turn, according to paragraph 1 of the Convent's Statute, the Convent in its spiritual life is guided by the canonical Statute of the Russian Orthodox Church. According to Article 12 of the Law on Churches and Parishes, the Statute of the monastery defines the competence of its governing bodies. *The governing bodies of the monastery are the Patriarch, the abbess and the spiritual council of the Convent.* Paragraphs 21, 23 of the Convent's Statute contain a closed comprehensive list of the powers of the Abbess and the Spiritual Council. This list does not include the authority to decide on the withdrawal of the monastery from the hierarchical structure and jurisdiction of the Russian Orthodox Church. Therefore, neither the Abbess nor the Spiritual Council has the right to make such a decision.

Similarly, according to paragraph 17 of the Statute of the Convent, the Patriarch may exercise the powers envisaged by the ROC canonical Statute and the Convent's Statute. And here it should be particularly noted that neither the canonical Statute of the Russian Orthodox Church, nor the Convent's Statute grants the Patriarch the authority to unilaterally decide on the monastery's withdrawal from the hierarchical



structure and jurisdiction of the Russian Orthodox Church. Such a decision implies a sequence of church events. It cannot be made unilaterally; it requires collegiality.

It should be noted that the entire life of the Church is based on the principle of conciliarity. At the heart of conciliarity lies the belief in the presence and action of the Holy Spirit in the Church, who "*will guide you into all truth*" (John 16:13). It is precisely the gatherings of believers (bishops, clergy, and laity) that express the Church as a community in which all members actively participate.

Conciliarity, in Greek "καθολικότητα" (universality, wholeness), speaks of the unity of the Church as the Body of Christ, where each believer is part of a single whole. This unity is not merely organizational but is a mystical unity grounded in faith, communion, and the shared salvation.

The principle of synodality is expressed in practice in the fact that councils (assemblies) are convened to decide on important matters of faith, Church discipline and governance. Decisions on global matters, such as combating heresies and defining dogmas belong to Ecumenical Councils. Local matters are decided by Local Councils. The decisions of the Local Councils are binding on the Church that called them, but must be in agreement with the decisions of the Ecumenical Councils.

Canonically, the synodality of the Orthodox Church is expressed *inter alia* in such rules about the episcopate as the equality of bishops, although among them there may be primates (e.g. patriarchs, metropolitans) who may have a special administrative role, but they do not have the supreme authority over others. The bishop of the Orthodox Church is the head of the diocese and is responsible for its spiritual leadership. However, a bishop does not act in isolation; rather, he acts in accordance with other bishops and councils of the Church.

The Synod ("σύνοδος" - assembly, council), composed of bishops, governs the affairs of the local Church in between the councils. It is the Synod that ensures the governance of the church life, dealing with matters that need to be dealt with in the periods between the councils. By the decision of the Synod of the Russian Orthodox Church and the subsequent decree of the Patriarch, the Pühtitsa Convent was granted the status of a Stauropegial Monastery.

Thus, the question of the withdrawal of the Pühtitsa Convent from this status cannot be decided by any of the Convent's governing bodies, such as the Spiritual Council, the Abbess or the Patriarch alone.

In addition to the abovementioned, it should be reiterated that the life of the Convent is defined by its Statute. The relationship of the Spiritual governor to the Convent and his authority is defined by the Statute as well. For example, paragraph 1.3 of the Convent's Statute speaks of decrees, rather than orders of the Patriarch. The decrees of the Patriarch, which guide the Convent, are listed in the Convent's Statute. But there is no decree in the Convent's Statute on the basis of which the Patriarch can oblige the sisters to pray for anyone, for example, for soldiers. The Convent is obliged to fulfil the decrees stipulated in the statutes.

The right to appeal to the Patriarch for him to withdraw the stauropegial status is not envisaged by the Statute of the Convent neither for the monastery itself (para. 9 of

the Statute) nor its bodies (Chapter III of the Statute). In our earlier replies we also highlighted the impossibility of such an appeal. Thus, in our letter of June 2024 we explained our position in terms of our duty to fulfil the vows taken at monastic tonsure. One who enters monasticism takes a vow of absolute obedience. Henceforth, he is not guided by his own desires or his own will, but by obedience. The monks in the monastery have no will of their own, we live by obedience. Therefore, the Convent has no right to make such an appeal.

This is the point we attempted to convey to the representatives of the Ministry at our meeting in April, stating that such a request can only be initiated by the Ministry itself. Since then, we have been compelled to deeply study this issue in the context of intra-church relations. As a result, we can say that such an initiative from the Convent itself would, in a very real sense, represent a spiritual death for us as monastics, leading to the loss of unity with the Universal Church and, even more tragically, the presence of the Holy Spirit. What was once an intuitive feeling has now become a clear understanding, as the canons of the Church also warn us of these consequences.

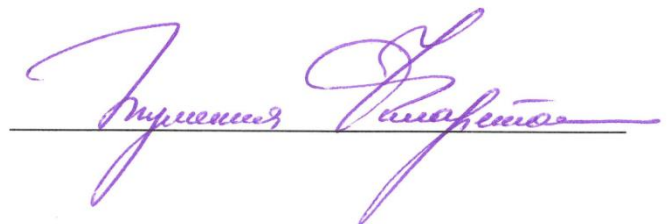
Based on the above we appeal to you, as our long-standing partner with whom we have always co-operated in finding reasonable resolutions for all issues, with our request to reconsider all the arguments we have presented. We do hope that both the tenor of monastic life as well as the absence of any claims on part of the State regarding the politicisation or Convent's involvement in political life will not go unnoticed. As the esteemed Minister assured us, there is no evidence that the monastery participates in such activities. This lack of involvement was also confirmed in the Minister's address to the Parliament on October 23, 2024.

Let me now express my confidence that our appeal will help all those concerned to have a clear understanding of the boundaries which the Convent has no legal right to cross. Adherence to the norms of ecclesiastical existence is the cornerstone upon which the Pühtitsa Monastery has stood for over a century, and without which its existence is inconceivable.

With all due respect, we reserve the right to make this letter public.

We do hope for your understanding.

Best regards,



Abbess of the Pühtitsa Dormition  
Stauropegial Convent