

967 Corruption is a dangerous phenomenon for society, and—from the Christian point of view—a sin.⁵⁸¹ A government loses its purpose: it ceases to represent and defend its citizens, and instead becomes a menace to them. A Christian may not participate in corrupt acts and should not remain silent when others commit them.

*Remember, Lord, our nation under God.
(Anaphora of the Liturgy of Saint Basil the Great)*

4. Love for Country and People

968 The road to our heavenly homeland passes through our earthly homeland.

Christians benefit their country more than others. For they form and channel the devotion of their fellow citizen to the God of all creation. They also help those who live in their small cities on earth to ascend to the heights of the divine and heavenly city. "but is fulfilled the word of the Lord: "You have been faithful in the smallest city, come into a great one" (see Mt 25:21).⁵⁸²

For us, a country is a person's native land, which connects that person to a people and culture. Christian moral teaching refers to love for one's country as the virtue of patriotism. Love for one's country derives from the fourth commandment: "Honour your father and your mother that your days may be long in the land which the Lord your God gives you" (Ex 20:12).

969 In the words of Metropolitan Andrey Sheptytsky:

A fatherland can be a powerful organization, guaranteeing happiness for all its citizens, only when it is not a whole that has been artificially constructed of different and diverse parts. Rather it should be similar to a monolithic organism, that is, a body vivified by a single spirit which develops from an inner vital force and makes up for its inherent deficiencies. And by its nature, this organism is a healthy, strong body that is conscious of its purpose and not only material but moral as well.⁵⁸³

⁵⁸¹ See PATRIARCH LUBOMYR, Звернення до Вірних на Великий піст Єпископів Києво-Галицького верховного Архієпископства УГКЦ про явище хабарництва у нашій країні та як його поборювати [Letter to the Faithful of the Bishops of the Kyiv-Galician Major Archbishopric for Great Lent On the Phenomenon of Bribery in Our Nation and How to Fight It] (March 5, 2008).

⁵⁸² ORIGEN, *Against Celsus*, VIII, 74: PG 11, 1629.

⁵⁸³ METROPOLITAN ANDREY SHEPTYTSKY, Як будувати рідну хату? [How Shall We Build Our Home?] (1942), 3-4

970 Patriotism, as the virtue of love for country, is incompatible with a hatred or belittlement of other nations or races. These are manifestations of chauvinism and racism. True patriotism is active: it promotes the preservation and development of national culture and self-awareness. A patriot will never replace God with the nation and will not reduce faith to one of the aspects of national culture.

971 In view of this, Metropolitan Andrey Sheptytsky teaches:

A Christian should love all people, but this does not impede one from loving his or her family and country first. And just as love of neighbour does not run counter to love of family, so too, it is not contrary to a love of country. The Christian can and should be a patriot, but his patriotism cannot be hatred, nor can it demand obligations contrary to faith. That which appears to be patriotism, but would entail hatred or would contradict the faith, is not true patriotism.⁵⁸⁴

972 Love for one's people is also a manifestation of patriotism. A people is a spiritual community of persons united by language, tradition, history, and cultural heritage. A people cultivates national values that are the foundation of its identity. In a time of nation-building, Metropolitan Andrey wrote:

the task of the Ukrainian people will be to create such social Christian conditions that would ensure the true and continued happiness of citizens, so that they may find enough inner strength to overcome the centrifugal forces of internal disintegration, and successfully defend its borders from external enemies.⁵⁸⁵

973 A nation is a source and environment for the transmission of both national and Christian values to the individual. One of the greatest treasures of a nation is its native language, a point which Metropolitan Andrey emphasizes: "What makes a group of people one nation? First of all, language. All who speak Ukrainian or regard Ukrainian as their native language will constitute the Ukrainian people."⁵⁸⁶

974 A people's culture develops in the religious, moral, intellectual, aesthetic, and social fields. Every Christian, whose life consists of love for God and neighbour, is called to love his or her nation deeply, and to contribute to the preservation and development of its cultural and spir-

⁵⁸⁴ METROPOLITAN ANDREY SHEPTYTSKY, Пастирське послання до вірних Хрестиянська робота [Pastoral Letter to the Faithful On Christian Labour].

⁵⁸⁵ METROPOLITAN ANDREY SHEPTYTSKY, Як будувати рідну хату? [How Shall We Build Our Home?] (1942), 3.

⁵⁸⁶ METROPOLITAN ANDREY SHEPTYTSKY, Як будувати рідну хату? [How Shall We Build Our Home?] (1942), 22.