

# Collective appeal from parishioners of the St. Elisabeth Monastery to the Metropolitan about the actions of Archpriest Andrei Lemeshonok

 [belarus2020.churchby.info/kollektivnoe-obrashchenie-prihozhan-svyato-elisavetinskogo-monastyrya-mitropolitu-o-dejstviyah-protoiereya-andreya-lemeshonka](http://belarus2020.churchby.info/kollektivnoe-obrashchenie-prihozhan-svyato-elisavetinskogo-monastyrya-mitropolitu-o-dejstviyah-protoiereya-andreya-lemeshonka)

08/25/2020



*Your Eminence Paul,*

*Metropolitan of Minsk and Zaslavsky, Patriarchal Exarch of All Belarus*

*Collective appeal*

*We, parishioners and employees (present and former) of the St. Elisabeth Monastery in Minsk, ask you to understand and take action against the monastery's confessor, Archpriest Andrei Lemeshonok, who in his conversations, addresses and sermons openly speaks about his personal civic position, political situation not only in our country, but throughout the world. Sermons turned into political information. Often in his statements Andrei Lemeshonok operates with unconfirmed and unproven facts. Recordings of his conversations, addresses and sermons are available on the YouTube channel and the monastery website; they are actively distributed through social networks.*

*On August 21, 2020, an explanation from the Synodal Department of the Belarusian Orthodox Church on relations between the Church and society on the participation of believers in social and political life was published on the website of the Belarusian Orthodox Church. This document states that "any statements in connection with the current difficult situation in the Republic of Belarus, made by individual representatives of the Belarusian Orthodox Church, both clergy and laity, are a form of expression of their personal civic position and reflect exclusively the applicants' personal view of what is happening. All these statements do not reflect the official position of the Belarusian Orthodox Church, and they*

*should not be perceived or interpreted in the interests of any party,” and that “the Orthodox Church considers a call for participation or non-participation in political actions to be inappropriate for its mission.”*

*We consider it necessary to publish on the website of the Belarusian Orthodox Church an appeal that the statements of Archpriest Andrei Lemeshonok regarding the situation in the country, his political views do not reflect the official position of the Belarusian Orthodox Church, as was done regarding the content of the sermon of His Grace Archbishop Artemy of Grodno and Volkovysk, delivered by him in Pokrovsky Cathedral of the city of Grodno on Sunday, August 16, 2020.*

*The activities of the St. Elisabeth Monastery have long gone beyond its internal walls. Many lay people work here, the monastery is known not only in Belarus, but also far beyond its borders. The audience that listens to sermons and conversations online, reads texts published on the site, covers practically the whole world. Expressing his personal civic position and political views, Archpriest Andrei Lemeshonok passes it off as the position of the entire monastery: monks, employees and the entire clergy. Some listeners also perceive it as the official position of the Belarusian Orthodox Church, since nowhere is it said that the Belarusian Orthodox Church does not support the statements of Archpriest Andrei Lemeshonok.*

*As evidence that Andrey Lemeshonok is voicing his position on behalf of the entire monastery, we are sending you an audio recording of a meeting for employees that took place on August 18, 2020. All employees of the monastery were forcibly convened to this meeting. It was assumed that people would be able to speak out, but this was a monologue by Andrei Lemeshonok, who stated that the entire monastery agreed with all his statements. All those who disagreed were asked to leave and the monastery cleric was not allowed to speak.*

*There are also other points in this post that we ask you to pay attention to: tone, address, inability to express your opinion on any issue. Disagreement is suppressed and persecuted. The greatest concern and anxiety is caused by the frequent phrase of Father Andrei: “I prayed and God revealed it to me.” With this argument, Father Andrei explains almost any of his decisions and opinions, both on spiritual and on general organizational, economic and financial issues of the monastery. We ask you to evaluate these words and actions.*

*Thus, a split formed among the staff and parishioners of the monastery, expressed in open rejection and persecution of a different civil position. The schism is provoked and fueled by the actions and words of Archpriest Andrei Lemeshonok .*

*We would also like to express our outrage at the non-compliance with measures aimed at preventing the spread of coronavirus infection in the St. Elisabeth Monastery. Social distancing measures, wearing masks and communion with sterilization of the spoon were not*

*purposefully observed at the height of the pandemic by the decision of Andrei Lemeshonok. The confessor of the monastery calls on his flock not to be afraid of anything, since they follow Christ. Worshipers who are afraid are judged.*

*As a result of this uncompromising position, which runs counter to the position of the Orthodox Church, since the beginning of the outbreak of the coronavirus epidemic, almost the entire St. Elisabeth Monastery, including clergy, monks, employees and a significant part of the parishioners, has become ill. Many were very seriously ill and are still recovering. Several white sisters and one nun died. We believe that in this way Archpriest Andrei Lemeshonok showed open disobedience to the highest church authorities, which led to bewilderment and confusion of many parishioners, as well as to grave consequences and human suffering that could have been avoided*

*We love St. Elisabeth Monastery very much and want to remain its parishioners. But in the current situation, we are forced to visit other churches.*

*08/25/2020*

*With respect and love in the Lord,*

*parishioners and employees of the St. Elisabeth Monastery.*