Orthodox Priest Dies Days After Being Gunned Down in Kiev

July 29, 2015

A 41-year-old priest from the Ukrainian Orthodox Church's Moscow Patriarchate died on Wednesday after having been shot by two unknown assailants in Kiev, the church's press service said in a statement.

Roman Nikolayev, a priest at Kiev's St. Tatiana Church, was shot twice in the head on Sunday at the entrance to his apartment. He then fell into a coma from which he never recovered.

None of Nikolayev's possessions were stolen. The investigation is still ongoing and no police details have been released, according to the church's statement.

The Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the Moscow Patriarchate enjoys a substantial degree of autonomy, but is still formally subordinate to Moscow. It has more parishes than any other church in Ukraine. The Kiev government supports the Ukrainian Church of the Kiev Patriarchate, which split from the Moscow Patriarchate in 1992 and is completely independent from it.

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