



## **Working group for cultural cooperation between Russian Orthodox Church and Roman Catholic Church meets for a regular session in Moscow**

On March 23, 2017, the Joint Working Group for cultural cooperation between the Russian Orthodox Church and the Roman Catholic Church held its annual meeting at the Moscow Patriarchate department for external church relations (DECR).

From the Russian Orthodox Church the meeting was attended by Metropolitan Hilarion of Volokolamsk, DECR chairman; Bishop Antoniy of Bogorodsk, head of the Moscow Patriarchate office for institutions abroad, Hieromonk Stephan (Igumnov), DECR secretary for inter-Christian relations, Hieromonk Siluan (Nikitin), director of the Sretensky Monastery Publishers in Moscow, and the Rev. Alexiy Dikarev, DECR staff member.

The Roman Catholic Church was represented by Cardinal Kurt Koch, president of the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity, Archbishop-Metropolitan Paul Pezzi of the Archdiocese of the Mother of God in Moscow, Rev. Father Hyacinthe Destivelle, OP. Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity, and P. Gumenyuk, Kirche in Not charity.

The meeting was also attended by D. Mayakov, administrator of the Moscow Synodal Choir, and I. Lapshin, director of the St. Gregory the Theologian Charity.

Opening the meeting, Metropolitan Hilarion noted that it was already a third meeting of the Joint Working Group for cultural cooperation between the Russian Orthodox Church and the Roman Catholic Church since its establishment in 2015. For the past period, the Working Group proved its high effectiveness in organizing and conducting joint cultural events in both Russia and Italy, which promote deeper knowledge of Eastern and Western traditions and mutual understanding between Orthodox and Catholic Christians.

The meeting summed up the work carried by the Working Group last year and considered several new projects to be realized in the period between 2017 and early 2018, including concerts of spiritual and classical music, art and subject expositions, publishing of books by Patriarch Kirill and Pope Emeritus Benedict XVI in Italian and Russian, as well as students' exchanges.

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