



## **Primate of the Russian Orthodox Church addresses faculty and students of the University of Balamand**

[gallery]

On 15 November 2011, His Holiness Patriarch Kirill of Moscow and All Russia visited the University of Balamand.

President of the University, Dr. Elie Salem greeted Patriarch Kirill and told him about the history and life of the University at present.

His Holiness met with the faculty and students at the Assembly Hall. Some five hundred people attended the meeting, including the ambassadors of Russia and Ukraine, hierarchs and clerics of the Orthodox Church of Antioch, and members of the Moscow Patriarchate's delegation.

In his introductory speech, Dr. Salem underscored the importance of the Russian Church and Russian Orthodox culture, reminded the listeners of the trials that befell the Russian Church during the years of persecution in the 20th century, and told them about the ministry of His Holiness Patriarch Kirill. Dr. Salem emphasized the tremendous contribution made by Russia to the development of the system of education in Syria and Lebanon in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. The Russian Orthodox and Russian people are caring for the state of Orthodox in the Middle East as before.

His Holiness Patriarch Kirill presented his book 'Freedom and Responsibility' published in the Arabic language and thanked all those present for the opportunity to meet with them at the University of Balamand, which plays a special part in the intellectual life in Lebanon and of the entire Orthodox world. He spoke of ethics, morality, and of freedom and responsibility in particular, as the destiny of human civilization will depend on how the problem of their correlation is solved by each of us and by all humanity.

His Holiness donated several copies of his book to the University and wished its faculty and students success in their labours.