



THE RUSSIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH
Department for External Church Relations

The DECR Chairman sends congratulations to the Coptic Patriarch Tawadros II on the occasion of his 70th birthday



In a message to His Holiness Pope Tawadros II, Pope of Alexandria and Patriarch of the Throne of Saint Mark in all Africa and the Middle East, Metropolitan Anthony of Volokolamsk, Chairman of the Department for External Church Relations of the Moscow Patriarchate, congratulated the Primate of the Coptic Church on his 70th birthday and the tenth anniversary of his enthronement. The congratulatory message reads:

His Holiness TAWADROS II
Pope of Alexandria
and Patriarch of the See of Saint Mark
in all Africa and the Middle East

Your Holiness,

Please accept my heartfelt greetings on these memorable dates – your 70th jubilee and the 10th anniversary of your election to the ancient Throne of the Coptic Patriarchs.

From your youth preserving the pure religion and undefiled before God (Jas 1:27), you embarked on the path of monastic life and priestly and archpastoral ministry, performing all your obediences with zeal and love. Having found favour and good understanding in the sight of God and man (Prov 3:4), by the Divine Providence you assumed the Patriarchal office and take pastoral care of the Christian people of Egypt entrusted to you.

The recent decade has been a time of a new spiritual uplift for the Coptic Church, of the development of its academic, cultural, social, educational, missionary, and youth work. And for your spiritual children residing nowadays outside their historical homeland it has also been a time of building and adorning dozens of churches, of establishing new episcopal sees and parishes. The Coptic Christian tradition is gaining world-wide prominence and respect, with its representatives taking part in inter-Christian and interfaith forums and in the work of secular international organisations.

Over the years of your Primatial ministry, the relationships between the Coptic Church and the Moscow Patriarchate have attained a new high level. Within the framework of the Bilateral Commission for Dialogue we successfully implement our joint initiatives, carrying out theological talks, developing cooperation in the academic and diakonia spheres, as well as promoting contacts between representatives of our respective monastic communities and church media. Essential is our mutual assistance in providing pastoral guidance to the Russian communities in Egypt and to the Coptic believers in Russia. I hope that our manifold and fruitful cooperation continues just as successfully to the glory of our Lord and according to the riches of his grace (Eph 1:7).

May Christ the Chief Shepherd preserve Your Holiness in the abundance of spiritual and bodily strength, granting unto you His help in your Patriarchal ministry for many and good years!

With love in the Lord,

+Anthony
Metropolitan of Volokolamsk
Chairman
Department for External Church Relations
Moscow Patriarchate