DECR chairman has expressed condolences over the demise of Metropolitan Amfilohije of Montenegro and the Littoral

Metropolitan Hilarion of Volokolamsk, head of the Moscow Patriarchate's department for External church relations (DECR), has sent to His Holiness Irenaeus, Patriarch of Serbia, condolences over the passing away of Metropolitan Amfilohije of Montenegro and the Littoral.

Your Holiness,

Having learnt with sorrow about the demise of His Eminence Amfilohije, Metropolitan of Montenegro and the Littoral, I extend to you my profound condolences over the grievous loss endured by the fraternal Serbian Orthodox Church.

The departed belonged to a generation of hierarchs who through sacrificial work restored the fullness of church life after long years of desecrating the spiritual tradition of forefathers. For the three decades of his hierarchal ministry on the See of Montenegro and the Littoral, hundreds of churches and monasteries were restored and the capital city of Podgorica was adorned with the magnificent Cathedral of the Resurrection of Christ, which was consecrated by Your Holiness together with His Holiness Patriarch Kirill of Moscow and All Russia.

As the good shepherd who lays his life for the sheep (Jn. 10:11), Metropolitan Amfilohije of Montenegro and the Littoral gave all his might to his beloved flock. Through his prayers the *Lord added to their number who were being saved* (Acts 2:47) by gathering around the archpastor thousands of believers whom he as a wise and loving father inspired to glorify God with one mouth and one heart and to work together for building up the body of Christ (Eph. 4:12). A worthy successor of the lofty ministry of St Peter of Cetina, Metropolitan Amfilohije of Montenegro and the Littoral, like this great saint, revealed to the modern world an amazing image of a fearless church leader by raising the Montenegrin people of God to the prayerful struggle for the dignity of the Most Holy Serbian Orthodox Church, for the preservation of shrines erected by devoted ancestors.

The departed archpastor was a giftedt theologian; he worked much in the field of theological education. From his pen came a multitude of works, which have gained wide publicity, including in the Russian Orthodox Church.

Together with the hierarchs, pastors and the faithful of the Serbian Orthodox Church I lift up prayers to the Lord that He may repose the soul of the late metropolitan. Eternal memory be to him!

With respectful love in the Lord,

Metropolitan Hilarion of Volokolamsk

Chairman

Department for External Church Relations

Moscow Patriarchate

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