THE RUSSIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH
Department for External Church Relations

Patriarch Kirill congratulates the Primate of the Bulgarian Orthodox Church on his 75th birthday

His Holiness Patriarch Kirill of Moscow and All Russia congratulated His Holiness Patriarch Neophyte, Primate of the Bulgarian Orthodox Church, on his 75th birthday.

His Holiness Neophyte

Metropolitan of Sophia

Patriarch of Bulgaria

Your Holiness, Beloved in the Lord Brother and Concelebrant at God's altar:

Kindly accept my cordial congratulations on your 75th birthday.

A worthy successor of the late Patriarchs of Bulgaria, Kirill and Maxim, you are concerned for the preservation of the paternal traditions of the fraternal Bulgarian people bred in the Orthodox faith by St. John of Rila, St. Euphemius of Tarnovo and an assembly of God-bearing devotees who continued the work of Ss Cyril and Methodius Equal to the Apostles in the land of Bulgaria.

By your pious life fully dedicated to the Lord Jesus Christ and His Holy Church you show the faithful *a pattern of good works* (Tit. 2:7), edifying them to behave *holily and justly* (1 Thes. 2:10) in their contacts with neighbors and to put right their steps towards the fulfillment of the commandments of God.

With gratitude and invariable warmth I remember your repeated visits to the Russian Church with which your personal life is so closely connected. Everybody who had the occasion to study together with you at Moscow Theological Academy testify to Your Holiness's openness and kind mind.

Sharing with you the joy of today's celebration, I lift up prayers to the Almighty that He may strengthen your spiritual and physical resources and grant you His inexhaustible beneficial help in your further Patriarchal ministry.

With brotherly love in Christ,

+ Kirill

Patriarch of Moscow and All Russia

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