



Sixth International Conference on Orthodoxy in the Far East takes place in St. Petersburg



On 28th – 29th September 2020, the 6th International Research to Practice Conference on Orthodoxy in the Far East was held in St. Petersburg. It was organized by the St. Petersburg Theological Academy, the Faculty of Asian and African Studies of the St. Petersburg State University, and the National Library of Russia, with the support of the Pallady Charitable Foundation.

The conference began its work on 28th September at the National Library of Russia. Its director, Mr. Alexander Vershinin, addressed the participants in the forum with the words of greeting, noting that collections of the National Library of Russia, which is celebrating the 225th anniversary of its foundation this year, grew, to a large extent, thanks to the works of staff members of the Russian Ecclesiastical Mission in China.

Prof. Mikhail Piotrovsky, dean of the Faculty of Asian and African Studies of the St. Petersburg State University and director of the State Hermitage Museum, emphasized the importance of the Russian missionaries' efforts in building cultural bridges between Russia and Asian countries. "Thanks to the work of the Russian missionaries, Russia learned about China, and through Orthodoxy China learns about Russia," he said.

Mr. Dmitry Petrovsky of the Moscow Patriarchate's Department for External Church Relations conveyed to the participants in the conference greetings from the DECR chairman, Metropolitan Hilarion of Volokolamsk, and pointed out the important role of the forum which since 1991 has been reviving the memory of the Russian missionaries and their work in Asian countries.

Mr. Oleg Markin, executive director of the Pallady Charitable Foundation, noted in his speech that the conference had begun its work on the birthday of one of the founders of Sinology in Russia, Archimandrite Pallady (Kafarov), head of the 13th and 15th Russian Ecclesiastical Missions in China.

On 29th September the conference continued its work at the St. Petersburg Theological Academy. The rector of the Academy, Bishop Siluan of Petergof, greeted all those present.

The conference was followed by a round table meeting. Its participants discussed various issues pertaining to the compilation of a biographical dictionary of staff members of the Russian Ecclesiastical Mission in China and a monograph about Orthodox churches in China. Among the topics raised during the meeting was also the history of interaction between the Russian Mission and non-Orthodox missions in China.

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