



## **Patriarch Kirill presides over the first 2020 meeting of the Russian Orthodox Church Holy Synod**



On 11 March 2020, His Holiness Patriarch Kirill of Moscow and All Russia presided over the first session of the Holy Synod to be held in 2020. The meeting took place at the patriarchal and synodal residence in the St. Daniel Monastery.

Before the beginning of the session, His Holiness greeted the Holy Synod members and addressed himself to them with introductory remarks:

“Today we have a rather extensive agenda. It will include many important items, including difficult ones on the cadres. However, I would like to say in advance some words about the situation that has developed in Moscow in connection with the emergence of the coronavirus. By God’s grace, there is no epidemic or pandemic but only some isolated cases. But as the disease is very insidious, its development should be stopped at the stage when the process is still controllable.

“In Moscow and Sankt-Petersburg, quite well considered measures are taken to stop the spread of the disease; but the question always arises: how will the Church behave in a particular situation? We will consider this problem and I will note that we have clear precedents. We used to go through many epidemics. I remember the cholera epidemic, which so much disturbed both the population and the public and the authorities. The Church has a certain experience of work in such a situation, but as I have already said, there is no epidemic whatsoever. There are isolated cases, but it would be useful to consider our Church’s response to this development.

“I would also like to say that since the previous session there have been important activities in the sphere of external church work. I would like to dwell on the meeting of heads and representatives of Local Orthodox Churches in Jordan. It was the first attempt at a conciliar discussion of the problem that has arisen in the universal Orthodoxy due to the developments in Ukraine. I will present certain information about this event and then we could discuss this topic.

“There will also be issues important enough for our internal agenda, so I call upon everybody to engage in active co-work”.

Along with the permanent members of the Holy Synod, the Summer Session (March-August) was attended by summoned hierarchs including Metropolitan Maximillian of Irkutsk and Angarsk, Archbishop Tikhon of Podolsk, Bishop Anthony of Akhtuba and Yenotayevsk, Bishop Ignatij of Uvarovo and Kirsanov, and Bishop Yevgeniy of Nizhniy Tagil and Nevyansk.

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