



## His Holiness Patriarch Kirill chairs last in 2019 session of the Holy Synod of the Russian Orthodox Church



On 26<sup>th</sup> December 2019, at the Patriarchal and Synodal residence in St. Daniel's Monastery in Moscow, the Holy Synod of the Russian Orthodox Church began its last in 2019 session under the chairmanship of His Holiness Patriarch Kirill of Moscow and All Russia.

Opening the meeting, the Primate of the Russian Orthodox Church said, in particular:

“We are opening the last session in the year which is drawing to an end. We have many items on our agenda; besides, the last session, as always, provides an opportunity to analyse all that has happened this year and to reflect on how we should plan our church life for the coming year.

“Regrettably, the Ukrainian schism has provoked a serious division among the Local Churches, and the future of the Ecumenical Orthodoxy will depend on the resolution of this problem. Each Local Church bears responsibility for the common fate of the Ecumenical Church, for the preservation of its unity. It

refers to the Russian Orthodox Church as well – the largest in the number of bishops and faithful. Of course, we are deeply concerned over the current situation in the family of the Orthodox Churches. We will reflect on and discuss all this, but, first of all, we have a very wide-ranging agenda pertaining to the internal life of our Church.”

The permanent members of the Holy Synod are: Metropolitan Onufry of Kiev and All Ukraine; Metropolitan Juvenaly of Krutitsy and Kolomna; Metropolitan Vladimir of Kishinev and All Moldova; Metropolitan Alexander of Astana and Kazakhstan, head of the Metropolitan area in the Republic of Kazakhstan; Metropolitan Vikenty of Tashkent and Uzbekistan, head of the Metropolitan area of Central Asia; Metropolitan Varsonofy of St. Petersburg and Ladoga; Metropolitan Pavel of Minsk and Zaslavl, Patriarchal Exarch of All Belarus; Metropolitan Hilarion of Volokolamsk, chairman of the Moscow Patriarchate’s Department for External Church Relations, and Metropolitan Dionisy of Voskresensk, chancellor of the Moscow Patriarchate.

Invited to take part in the winter session (September – February) were Metropolitan Kornily of Arkhangelsk and Kholmogory, Metropolitan Grigory of Chelyabinsk and Miass, Metropolitan Dimitry of Chita and Petrovsk-Zabaykalsky, Bishop Ignaty of Vyborg and Priozersk, and Bishop Mathew of Sourozh.

*Press Service of the Patriarch of Moscow and All Russia/*

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