



**THE RUSSIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH**

Department for External Church Relations

## **Solemn reception on the occasion of reunification of the Archdiocese of Orthodox parishes of Russian tradition in Western Europe with the Russian Orthodox Church**

On 3 November 2019, a solemn reception on the occasion of reunification of the Archdiocese of Orthodox parishes of Russian tradition in Western Europe with the Russian Orthodox Church was held at the refectory chambers of the Cathedral of Christ the Saviour in Moscow.

Metropolitan John of Dubna addressed words of gratitude to His Holiness Patriarch Kirill, saying:

I thank You wholeheartedly for everything You have done for us after the first hour of misfortune that had befallen our Archdiocese. You responded as pastor and father, and we immediately felt and appreciated Your support and depth of thinking.

You have given us an opportunity of a dialogue, a dialogue in truth crowned with the Charter read out this morning thanks to the joint commission set up due to Your mediation.

I would like to express special thanks to all members of the Holy Synod who have supported You in saving our Archdiocese.

The word 'thanks' is not strong enough to express our gratitude coming from the spirit's deepest deep. Thank You for accepting us and for all actions that were taken in this regard. I believe that all those accompanying us are very grateful to You for determination in salvation of our Archdiocese.

As I have said, the only man whom I have followed on this path was Metropolitan Eulogius whose words I perceive as a spiritual testament. My mission was to execute this testament, and I enjoyed the support of our clerics and brothers and sisters of our Archdiocese who prayed, worked, and took and implemented the only salutary decision for our Archdiocese. I said that we have found ourselves as if in the Early Church with two ways: one to life and another to death. We were offered a way to death but thanks to prayer and God's grace we all succeeded in choosing the way to life.

Your Holiness! You, the Holy Synod and all those who did their best have brought back our hope

and opened a new future for us under Your leadership. On behalf of all those accompanying me I ask Your Holiness to accept our profound appreciation and remember us in Your holy prayers as we will remember You in our prayers and thank God for this wonderful day – the day of reunification with the Church of the Moscow Patriarchate that was divided by the toils and troubles of history but is united now by the grace of the Holy Spirit. Thank You!

Speaking at the reception were also Metropolitan Juvenaly of Krutitsy and Kolomna, Patriarchal vicar of the Diocese of Moscow; Metropolitan Hilarion of Volokolamsk, chairman of the Moscow Patriarchate's Department for External Church Relations; Metropolitan Antony of Korsun and Western Europe, Patriarchal Exarch for Western Europe and head of the Moscow Patriarchate's Administration for Institutions Abroad; and four clerics of the Archdiocese.

At the end of the reception His Holiness Patriarch Kirill made a closing speech.

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