



Metropolitan Hilarion meets with president of Italian Episcopal Conference

On September 15, 2015, Metropolitan Hilarion of Volokolamsk, head of the Moscow Patriarchate department for external church relations (DECR), who is on a visit to Madrid with a blessing of Patriarch Kirill of Moscow and All Russia, met with President of the Italian Episcopal Conference Gualtiero Bassetti, Archbishop of Perugia.

Taking part in the meeting were Bishop Ambrogio Spreafico of Frosinone, chairman of the inter-Christian commission of the Italian Episcopal Conference; Hieromonk Stephan (Igumnov), DECR secretary for inter-Christian relations; and Prof Adriano Rocucci, secretary-general of the Sant'Egidio Community.

They discussed the work of the working group of the Russian Orthodox Church and the Italian Episcopal Conference as part of the Russian-Italian Civil Society Dialogue Forum, which began working in February 2017, and the general development of Orthodox-Catholic relations.

Metropolitan Hilarion recalled an episode in the life of Patriarch Kirill of Moscow and All Russia, associated with Perugia: when he was head of the Moscow Patriarchate department for external church relations, the University of Perugia made him its *doctor emeritus*.

In his turn, Archbishop Bassetti shared his warm memories of meetings with His Holiness Patriarch Kirill.

The sides also discussed the date and themes of the next meeting of the Working Group of the Russian Orthodox Church and the Italian Episcopal Conference.

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