



His Holiness Patriarch Kirill attends concert at Strasbourg Cathedral performed by choir of Kiev Theological Schools

A concert performed by the choir of the Kiev Theological Academy and Seminary at the Strasbourg Cathedral on 26 May 2019 attracted a very large audience. Among those who attended the concert were His Holiness Patriarch Kirill of Moscow and All Russia accompanied by his delegation and Archbishop Luc Ravel of Strasbourg.

Earlier that day a dinner in honour of the Primate of the Russian Orthodox Church was given on behalf of Archbishop Luc Ravel.

In the cathedral the Archbishop of Strasbourg addressed the Primate of the Russian Orthodox Church with a speech of greetings, emphasizing an importance of his visit to Strasbourg. He also mentioned the historical meeting between Patriarch Kirill of Moscow and All Russia and Pope Francis that took place in Cuba in 2016.

In his speech the Roman Catholic hierarch mentioned the European Parliament election held in France that day. The Archbishop of Strasbourg expressed his conviction that Europe should uphold its Christian

roots, called upon Christians of the East and West of Europe to bear joint witness to the greatness of Christ and Gospel, and noted that states should respect the religious identity of its citizens.

His Holiness Patriarch Kirill thanked Archbishop Luc Ravel for the warm hospitality, saying, "I have already had an opportunity to thank you for giving support to the construction of a Russian Orthodox church here, in Strasbourg, and now, in the presence of your flock, I would like to thank you once again. This construction drew favourable attention of the citizens of Strasbourg, many of whom are your flock."

His Holiness Patriarch Kirill of Moscow and All Russia also noted that there are many Russian Orthodox Christians living in Strasbourg, for whom an opening of a church is a great joy and consolation.

"I believe it to be very important when modern people feel need for a church, because the modern civilization's values lie in another dimension, far from the spiritual one. When we build churches, when we gather in churches in such multitudes as now, we bear witness to our Christian faith. We insist on the intransient importance of Christian values and express willingness to defend and uphold these values and to bring up our children in accordance with them," His Holiness continued.

"Our today's meeting, this meeting with your flock will help us understand each other better and, what is of utmost significance, realize that we all have responsibility for the preservation of Christianity in today's society, responsibility for bearing witness to Christ Risen and Crucified," Patriarch Kirill added and wished to Archbishop Luc Ravel success in his ministry, and to his flock – peace, welfare and firm faith.

A concert of the choir of the Kiev Theological Schools followed. The choir directed by Archimandrite Leonty (Tupykalo) performed the Orthodox liturgical hymns in the ancient Strasbourg Cathedral.

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