All-Night Vigil by Rachmaninov is performed at the Moscow Church of ‘Joy to All the Afflicted’ Icon of the Mother of God



On March 23, 2019, Metropolitan Hilarion of Volokolamsk, chairman of the Moscow Patriarchate’s Department for External Church Relations (DECR), celebrated the All-Night Vigil at the Church of ‘Joy to All the Afflicted’ Icon of the Mother of God on Bolshaya Ordynka street, Moscow. Clerics of the church concelebrated.

The Academic Grand Choir ‘Masters of Choral Singing” sang the All-Night Vigil by Sergei Rachmaninov. Also singing at the service was the Moscow Synodal Choir.

Attending the service were representatives of the Roman Catholic Church Archbishop Francesco Cacucci of Bari-Bitonto; Archbishop Celestino Migliore, Apostolic Nuncio to the Russian Federation; and Rev. Hyacinthe Destivelle of the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity.

After the service Metropolitan Hilarion addressed the worshippers. He congratulated them on the feast of St. Gregory Palamas of Thessaloniki and reminded them that they heard Rachmaninov's music which is performed at the All-Night Vigil by tradition. This piece was performed only once a year and only at this church during the time of the Soviet Union. Now we sing it more often, and I thank the singers.

Metropolitan Hilarion added that Rachmaninov's All-Night Vigil is an outstanding piece of music, maybe the best for choir composed on the land of Russia. 'It is rather difficult for performing at church, but it is music that glorifies God.

'For us, Christians, the most meaningful and moving in this music by the great Russian composer is that it is the praise to the Almighty God.'

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