His Holiness Patriarch Kirill meets with His Beatitude Metropolitan Rostislav of the Czech Lands and Slovakia



On 31 January 2019, at the Patriarchal and Synodal residence in St. Daniel's Monastery in Moscow, His Holiness Patriarch Kirill of Moscow and All Russia met with His Beatitude Metropolitan Rostislav of the Czech Lands and Slovakia.

Representing the Russian Orthodox Church at the meeting were also Metropolitan Hilarion of Volokolamsk, chairman of the Moscow Patriarchate's Department for External Church Relations; Bishop Paramon of Bronnitsy; Archpriest Nikolai Balashov, DECR vice-chairman; Archpriest Nikolai Lischeniuk, rector of the Russian Orthodox Church's Metochion in Karlovy Vary; and Archpriest Igor Yakimchuk, DECR secretary for inter-Orthodox relations.

The Primate of the Orthodox Church of the Czech Lands and Slovakia was accompanied by Archbishop

George of Michalovce and Koshice; Archimandrite Seraphim (Shemyatovsky), rector of the Moscow Metochion of the Orthodox Church of the Czech Lands and Slovakia; Hieromonk Alexandr (Galushka), secretary of the Moscow Metochion of the Orthodox Church of the Czech Lands and Slovakia; and Archdeacon Maxim (Durila), cleric of the Prešov diocese.

The Primate of the Russian Orthodox Church cordially greeted His Beatitude Metropolitan Rostislav and the delegation that had arrived in Moscow to attend the celebrations marking the 10th anniversary of His Holiness Patriarch Kirill's enthronement.

"Every time we meet we can discuss issues of interest for both our Churches and together ponder on what paths the Orthodox Church is following today. Every Local Church has its own agenda and its own problems, and meetings with brothers often help us find answers to the questions that interest each of us," His Holiness said, in particular.

"Today the whole Orthodox Church is undergoing very serious ordeals caused, first of all, by the geopolitical changes that have taken place in the territory of our countries," Patriarch Kirill added.

As His Holiness noted, the geopolitical factor has always influenced church life, and therefore, today no one can say that the geopolitical context does not affect the situation of the Churches and the inter-church relationships. "Regrettably, we sense it especially strongly because of the current situation in Ukraine. I am sure that you know much, since there are many Ukrainians in the territory of Slovakia and you receive information about the problems facing the Ukrainian Orthodox Church these days," the Primate of the Russian Church said.

"However, despite all these difficulties, the Church in Ukraine and in other lands acts to the best of its abilities," His Holiness continued, "The ordeals that have befallen the believers subjected to discrimination today – you may be aware of seizures of church buildings and violence against the faithful – require confession in the spirit of Christians of the Early Church. Thus the believers can remain faithful to their Church and to the canonical order and to oppose the well-organized schismatic activity in Ukraine, supported by the state."

His Holiness also mentioned other challenges facing the Universal Orthodoxy these days.

"There were no easy times in the history of the Church. Each epoch poses new challenges and new problems to which every Local Church has to respond. And we, as the One Holy Catholic Apostolic Church, must together respond to the challenges and difficulties that are facing Orthodox Christians today," His Holiness Patriarch Kirill said in conclusion.

His Beatitude Metropolitan Rostislav of the Czech Lands and Slovakia congratulated the Primate of the Russian Orthodox Church on the 10th anniversary of his enthronement, saying, “The memorable jubilee that you are celebrating is not only yours, but of the whole Russian Orthodox Church. It is also important for the universal Orthodoxy.”

“Over the ten years of your Patriarchal ministry the Russian Orthodox Church under your leadership has successfully responded to the external challenges, both political and ecclesiastical ones. I wish that the developments in Ukraine do not overshadow the jubilee of your enthronement – the major reason of our gathering. On behalf of our Church I wholeheartedly congratulate you and hope that your pastoral wisdom, your paternal love and care will help you overcome all the problems,” His Beatitude Metropolitan Rostislav said.

DECR Communication Service

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