



DECR chairman greets His Holiness Patriarch Irinej with commemoration day of St Sava of Serbia

Metropolitan Hilarion of Volokolamsk, chairman of the Moscow Patriarchate's Department for External Church Relations, sent greetings to the Primate of the Serbian Orthodox Church on the commemoration day of St Sava of Serbia. The text of the letter is given below.

Your Holiness,

Please accept my heartfelt greetings with the commemoration day of St Sava of Serbia.

This feast, bridging centuries and generations, is of particular importance this year marking the 800th anniversary of establishment of the autocephalous Serbian Orthodox Church, whose founder and first Primate was St Sava.

Versatile is the personality of this saint, as well as his contribution to the Serbian history. Having taken monastic vows at the Russian monastery on Mt Athos at a young age, he became a great ascetic and zealot, founder of the Hilandar Monastery and mentor for the host of monastics, including his earthly father, St Simeon the Myrrh-Gusher. St Sava did much to enlighten the people entrusted to his care and to strengthen them in the holy Orthodox faith.

The Serbian Church is rightfully called the Church of St Sava, for it is with him that the centuries-old Orthodox spiritual tradition in the land of Serbia is associated.

People in Russia have always revered the life of St Sava, honouring his works, his love, his "faith and service and patient endurance" (Rev 2:19). The story of his life is a symbol of close fraternal ties between the Russian and the Serbian Orthodox Churches.

On this day of celebration for Your Holiness, as well as for your brothers the archpastors, clergy and laity of the Serbian Orthodox Church, I am sending you my prayerful wishes of peace, bodily strength and God's unceasing help in your Patriarchal ministry.

With respectful love in the Lord,

/+Hilarion/

Metropolitan of Volokolamsk

Chairman

Department for External Church Relations

Moscow Patriarchate

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