



**THE RUSSIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH**

Department for External Church Relations

## **DECR chairman congratulates the first hierarch of the Finnish Autonomous Orthodox Church on his 70th birthday**

*Metropolitan Hilarion of Volokolamsk, chairman of the Moscow Patriarchate's Department for External Church Relations, congratulated Archbishop Leo of Helsinki and All Finland on his 70<sup>th</sup> birthday. The text of the message reads as follows:*

Your Eminence, dear Vladyka:

Please accept my heartfelt greetings with your 70<sup>th</sup> birthday.

By the grace of God you have been worthily performing your service of First Hierarch of the Finnish Autonomous Orthodox Church for many years. Your labours have won you profound respect and love of you flock that sees you succeeding in “righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, meekness” (1 Tim 6:11).

It is with gratitude that I would like to note your considerable contribution to the strengthening and development of good relations between the Russian and the Finnish Orthodox Churches. Our Church highly appreciates the hospitality and love with which you always welcome representatives of the Russian Orthodox Church coming to Finland, as well as you attention to and care for the activities of the Representation of the Moscow Patriarchate in Finland.

Wholeheartedly wishing Your Eminence success in you spiritual doings, bodily strength and God's unceasing help in all your endeavours for the good of the Holy Church, I remain, with sincere love in the Lord,

**+ Hilarion**

**Metropolitan of Volokolamsk**

**Chairman**

**Department for External Church Relations**

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