



**THE RUSSIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH**

Department for External Church Relations

## **DECR chairman's condolences over the death of pastor Billy Graham**

*Chairman of the Moscow Patriarchate department for external church relations Metropolitan Hilarion of Volokolamsk has expressed to the president of the Billy Graham Evangelistic Association Franklin Graham his condolences over the death of his father, Dr. Billy Graham known for his preaching, public, charitable and peacemaking work. Below is the full text of the letter.*

Dear Brother in Christ,

Kindly accept my profound condolences to you and to the whole of your family over the death of your father, Dr. Billy Graham, an outstanding preacher and public figure, benefactor and peacemaker.

I happened to meet with your father last on November 7, 2014 – his 96th birthday, and that meeting made a strong impression on me. He mentioned then the history of his trips to the Soviet Union and Russia, while I conveyed him best regards from His Holiness Patriarch Kirill of Moscow and All Russia.

Your Father was a man of incredible power of will and spirit, always ready to proclaim the word of God without fear (Phil. 1:14). He dedicated all his life to the service of the Lord, telling the world about Christ. During all his long life, he never parted with the Bible; and when he preached he always held it in his hands. Whereas many in the West began to reject the biblical view of marriage and morality, Billy Graham always boldly and resolutely asserted it on all possible platforms, commanding respect in the Orthodox Church and in the whole Christian world by his uncompromising stand for the truth of Christ.

Despite his physical weakness, hoary with age, Billy Graham preserved good spirits and continued supporting initiatives of the Evangelical Association, which he founded and which you head today. Among them were projects realized together with the Russian Orthodox Church, such as the delivery of humanitarian aid to the aggrieved population in Donbas and organization of the World Summit in defence of persecuted Christians. The blessed memory of your father will be kept by many generations of Christians throughout the world.

I wish you and your family fortitude from Above in your bereavement.

With love in Christ,

+ Hilarion

Metropolitan of Volokolamsk

Chairman of the Department for External Church Relations

Moscow Patriarchate

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