



## **His Holiness Patriarch Kirill: What is sometimes forgotten in pursuit of different technologies is that mission is not a collection of methods, but practical work**

As His Holiness Patriarch Kirill mentioned in his address on 29 November 2017, the Bishops' Council of 2013 outlined several major spheres of missionary work – these are the so-called “inland” mission, the counter-sectarian work and the mission among indigenous minorities.

To fulfil this latter task, through the efforts of the Synodal Mission Department, since 2013, a total of 141 missionaries have been sent to dioceses of the Far East, Far North and Eastern Siberia – 92 priests and 49 laypeople from among students of the missionary educational institutions,

According to His Holiness, the mission among indigenous minorities is most successful in the regions where it is actively supported by a local diocese that starts acting without being urged by a synodal structure. As a positive example, the Patriarch mentioned the diocese of Yuzhno-Sakhalinsk, in which in 2013 a department for indigenous minorities was established. Apart from shepherding the baptized representatives of the indigenous population, staff members of this department regularly visit native villages, hold meetings with their dwellers and develop cooperation with regional administration and non-governmental organizations.

As for the “inland” mission, that is the enlightening of those who have been baptized, but have not to the full extent joined in the life of the Church, as well as those who, not being baptized, belong to the ethnic groups that traditionally profess Orthodoxy, we need to clearly define what missionary work is and how it must be carried out at the church-wide level and at the level of dioceses and parishes, His Holiness Patriarch Kirill emphasized.

“Regrettably, what is often forgotten in pursuit of different technologies is that mission is not a collection of methods, but practical work,” His Holiness said, “It is the education of those people, either baptized or not, who know nothing or almost nothing about the Gospel message. Your Eminences and Graces, it is important for us today to thoroughly discuss who the missionary activities should be promoted.”

*Bishops' Council Information Service*