Session of Russian Orthodox Church's Holy Synod on the eve of Bishops' Council and centenary of restoration of Patriarchate and enthronement of Patriarch Tikhon

The head of the synodal department for the Church's relations with society and mass media, V. Legoida, reported on the decisions made by the Holy Synod at its regular session on November 28, 2017, chaired by His Holiness Patriarch Kirill of Moscow and All Russia. The meeting was held on the eve of the Bishops' Council and the centenary celebration to mark the restoration of patriarchate and enthronement of Patriarch Tikhon.

The session was opened with a report by Patriarch Kirill on his visit to Romania for the meeting of primates and representatives of Local Orthodox Churches dated for the Year of the Memory of Defenders of Orthodoxy under the iconoclastic order and for the 10th anniversary of the enthronement of His Beatitude Patriarch Daniel of Romania.

'The Holy Synod', V. Legoida said, 'heard a report by His Holiness Patriarch Kirill on the 21st World Russian People's Council which took place in Moscow. It was agreed to thank Patriarch Kirill for his conceptual address at the council's plenary session and to point out the important role played by the World Russian People's Council as a standing public organization and intellectual platform'.

Patriarch Kirill informed the Holy Synod about the visits he made to the dioceses of Izhevsk, Sarapul, Glazov and St. Petersburg.

The Holy Synod considered the agenda of the forthcoming Sacred Bishops' Council of the Russian Orthodox Church, its rules of procedure and membership of its working bodies and resolved that they be submitted to the Bishops' Council for approval.

'Considering the importance of participation of the primates and the autonomous and self-governed parts of the Moscow Patriarchate in guiding the Bishops' Council's work', Mr. Legoida said, 'the Holy Synod resolved that the membership of the Holy Synod for the time of the Council's work should include Metropolitan Daniel of Tokyo and All Japan, Metropolitan Hilarion of Eastern America and New York, Metropolitan Alexander of Riga and All Latvia, and Metropolitan Cornelius of Tallinn and All Estonia'.

The Holy Synod also heard a report by Patriarch Kirill on the work of the Supreme Church Council. The

Holy Synod deemed it important that the work of this council, as devoted to a considerable extent to theological education, religious formation of children and youth, helped to adopt important decisions and to achieve positive results in these areas.

Among the important matters considered by the Holy Synod was the inclusion of the names of St. George (Konissky) the Archbishop of Mogilev and the Righteous Ioann of Korma (Archpriest Ioann I. Gashkevich), who had been canonized as locally venerated saints of the Exarchate of Belarus, into the church-wide calendar.

'Having heard the report of the Most Rev. Pavel, Metropolitan of Minsk and Zaslavsk, Patriarchal Exarch for Belarus, and the report by the Right. Rev. Pankraty, Bishop of Troitsk, chairman of the synodal canonization committee, the Holy Synod resolved that the agenda of the forthcoming Bishops' Council include an item on the glorification of the above-mentioned saints', Mr. Legoida reported.

An important task, Mr. Legoida said, was to submit to the Bishops' Council the conclusions made by the Synodal Biblical-Theological Commission on the documents of the Council of Crete. According to Mr. Legoida, this resolution was adopted by the Holy Synod after the report made by the Most Rev. Metropolitan Hilarion of Volokolamsk.

As the head of the department for the Church's relations with society and mass media noted, during the Holy Synod session, its members heard a report made by Metropolitan Hilarion of Volokolamsk in his capacity as head of the department for external church relations on the visit made to Russia by a delegation of the Church of England led by Archbishop Justin Welby of Canterbury.

'At the meeting, which took place at the Patriarchal and Synodal residence at the St. Daniel Monastery, Patriarch Kirill and Archbishop Welby paid special attention to the situation in the Middle East and North Africa, where the persecution against Christians continues. They also discussed the grave situation in Ukraine. As a result of the meeting they signed a joint statement,' Mr. Legoida pointed out.

In addition, the Holy Synod resolved that a center for training church specialists be established in the diocese of Smolensk and that Smolensk School for Choir Conductors and Icon-painters be incorporated in it. The Holy Synod made this decision after the report of the Most Rev. Archbishop Yevgeny of Vereya, chairman of the Russian Orthodox Church Education Committee, and the Most Rev. Metropolitan Isidore of Smolensk and Dorogobuzh.

'According to the procedure, the Holy Synod also approved the minutes of the Metropolitan Okrug of Kazakhstan and Central Asia', Mr. Legoida report in conclusion.

Synodal Department for the Church's Relations with Society and Mass Media/

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