



His Holiness Patriarch Kirill chairs regular session of the Supreme Church Council

On 12 October 2017, a regular session of the Supreme Church Council of the Russian Orthodox Church took place in the Supreme Church Council's Hall of the Cathedral of Christ the Saviour under chairmanship of His Holiness Patriarch Kirill of Moscow and All Russia.

The agenda includes consideration of the implementation of decisions of the Supreme Church Councils and the Bishops' Council and the approbation of the system of the development of qualification of the clergy as well as other topics.

The Primate of the Russian Church opened the session, welcomed the members of the Council and said:

"Our session is taking place in October, only several days before the centenary of the Revolution, and I would like to share some of my thoughts with you.

"One hundred years ago Russia was rushing to the Bolshevik revolution which was inevitable then in the shambolic situation of no governance and military crisis.

"We know the consequences of 1917 only too well. The church in which we are at the moment is a demonstrative example of the raging destruction, riots and breaking up the foundations of the state. A documentary shows the explosion of the church building, but today the Cathedral of Christ the Saviour is alive, rebuilt in its full splendor. As such it is a more important symbol for us: the symbol of reconciliation and rectification of tragic errors made by our predecessors.

"While assessing the events of 1917, we must see two pictures. The explosion of the cathedral and its rebuilding are links in a single chain of our history of the 20th century. By no means we will ever deny or justify the evil, but we must avow and analyze the facts so that horrors of the revolution would not repeat.

"At present we pray and gather together in the Cathedral. It is also a symbolic fact that sessions of the World Russian People's Council take place here because its main purpose is the consolidation of our nation. It was within these walls that we constantly speak about the necessity of reconciliation and the importance of solidarity which should have priority in public discussions.

“Is a balanced assessment of history possible? This question is liable to dispute and battles. History is a fertile soil for ideological speculations and the creating of myths, both national and antinational. It is easy to interpret history in a cunning manner, but falsehood and lie are unacceptable to an honest msn. What should be done? One must try to be diligent while working with the facts and avoid speculations, especially those that can injure many people as is the case with the not yet released film.

“The events of the 20th century remain a bleeding wound for many. The imperial passion-bearers, the assembly of the new martyrs and confessors, thousands upon thousands of victims, the eliminated spiritual heritage, the ousting of the national intellectual elite from the country... Unfortunately, these sorrowful pages of our past often become subjects of various speculations. The artist is entitled to artistic

fiction, yet fiction and lie are different things. Lie rudely distorts historical reality and misleads people. Propaganda, which plunged our nation into a revolutionary chaos and the abyss of suffering, was based on lie. Therefore Alexander Solzhenitsyn’s call “to live not by lies” was so penetrating and evoked a warm response especially among our artistic intelligentsia.

“‘History does not teach anything, but punishes for ignorance of the lessons’, said our great historian Vasily Kluchevsky. Which lessons of the 20th century should we learn so that we do not trip on the same rake?

“I would like to hope that our recollection of the events of the recent past, including works of art, will contribute to reconciliation, will not sow discord, bring about civil strife or become a matter for insulting someone’s feelings and values. We all – believers and non-believers, artists and those who are not artists, liberals and conservatives – are called to live in one and the same country, one society and care for its integrity.

“We pray for peace at each Liturgy. We should also pray for civil unity and the unity of our people, while remembering terrible temptations, discord and confrontations that shook Russia in the 20th century.”

The Supreme Church Council chaired by His Holiness the Patriarch consists of

Metropolitan Varsonofy of St. Petersburg and Ladoga, chancellor of the Moscow Patriarchate;

Metropolitan Hilarion of Volokolamsk, chairman of the Department for External Church Relations;

Metropolitan Clement of Kaluga and Borovsk, chairman of the ROC Publishing Council;

Metropolitan Arseny of Istra, first Patriarchal vicar for Moscow;

Metropolitan Ioann of Belgorod and Sary Oskol, chairman of the Synodal Department for Mission;

Metropolitan Merkury of Rostov and Novocherkassk, chairman of the Synodal Department for Education and Catechization;

Metropolitan Mark of Ryazan and Mikhailov, chairman of the Moscow Patriarchate's Finance and Economic Administration;

Metropolitan Kirill of Stavropol and Nevinnomyssk, chairman of the Synodal Department for Relations with the Cossacks;

Archbishop Yevgeny of Vereya, chairman of the Holy Synod's Education Committee;

Archbishop Feognost of Sergiev Posad, chairman of the Synodal Department for Monasteries and Monasticism;

Bishop Sergy of Solnechnogorsk, head of the Moscow Patriarchate's Administrative Secretariat;

Bishop Irinarkh of Krasnogorsk, head of the Synodal Department for Prison Ministry;

Bishop Panteleimon of Orekhovo-Zuevo, chairman of the Synodal Department for Church Charity and Social Ministry;

Bishop Tikhon of Yegorievsk, chairman of the Patriarchal Council for Culture;

Bishop Antony of Zvenigorod, head of the Administration of the Moscow Patriarchate's Institutions Abroad;

Bishop Seraphim of Lubertsy, chairman of the Synodal Department for Youth Affairs;

Archpriest Sergy Privalov, chairman of the Synodal Department for Cooperation with the Armed Forces and Law Enforcement Agencies;

Archpriest Dmitry Smirnov, chairman of the Patriarchal Commission for Family and Protection of Motherhood and Childhood;

Mr. Vladimir Legoida, chairman of the Synodal Department for Church's Relations with Society and Mass Media.

Invited to attend the session were Bishop Savva of Voskresensk, first deputy chancellor of the Moscow Patriarchate; Bishop Nikolai of Balashikha, acting head and editor-in-chief of the Moscow Patriarchate's Publishing House; Archpriest Nikolai Balashov, deputy chairman of the Moscow Patriarchate's Department for External Church Relations; Archpriest Maxim Kozlov, first deputy chairman of the ROC Education Committee; Archimandrite Savva (Tutunov), deputy chancellor of the Moscow Patriarchate; hegumeness Ksenia (Chernega), head of the Moscow Patriarchate's Legal Service; and Mr. A.Schipkov, first deputy chairman of the Synodal Department for Church's Relations with Society and Mass Media.

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