Coordinating Committee for Orthodox-Catholic Dialogue formulates new topics for further work



On 8 September 2017, the Coordinating Committee of the Joint International Commission for Theological Dialogue between the Orthodox Church and the Roman Catholic Church concluded its work. Taking part in the session that was held on the Island of Leros, Greece, was Metropolitan Hilarion of Volokolamsk, chairman of the Moscow Patriarchate's Department for External Church Relations.

As a results of the discussions, the representatives of the Local Orthodox Churches and the Roman Catholic Church took a decision to draft a document entitled 'Towards Unity in Faith: Theological and Canonical Issues.' It is expected that the document that will be prepared by an ad-hoc drafting group, made up of the Commission members, will sum up 37 years of the Orthodox-Catholic dialogue and set forth the major problems requiring discussion at its next stages.

The Coordinating Committee also found it advisable to set about considering the topic 'Primacy and Synodality in the Second Millennium and Nowadays.' This topic is a logical follow-up to the topic

‘Synodality and Primacy in the First Millennium’ that had been considered at the previous stage of the dialogue. The new document will focus on the developments that led to the breach in communion between the Orthodox and the Catholic Churches in the 11th century, as well as on its consequences for the Christians of the East and the West. Raised in the document will also be the issue of Unia that was discussed within the framework of the dialogue in 1991-2000, but remains critical. Representatives of the Russian Church and a number of other Local Orthodox Churches insisted that the discussion of this issue should be continued at the sessions of the Coordinating Committee.

In the morning of September 8, the Feast of the Nativity of the Most Holy Theotokos (according to the New Style Calendar), the Orthodox members of the Coordinating Committee prayed and partook of the Holy Communion during the Divine Liturgy celebrated in a church at the residence of metropolitans of Leros.

The Coordinating Committee will hold its next session in the end of 2018.

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