



**THE RUSSIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH**  
Department for External Church Relations

## **His Holiness Patriarch Kirill celebrates Paschal Great Vespers at the Cathedral of Christ the Saviour**

On 16 April 2017, the feast day of the Bright Resurrection of Christ, His Holiness Patriarch Kirill of Moscow and All Russia celebrated Paschal Great Vespers at the Cathedral of Christ the Saviour in Moscow.

Concelebrating with His Holiness were Metropolitan Juvenaly of Krutitsy and Kolomna; Metropolitan Hilarion of Volokolamsk, chairman of the Moscow Patriarchate's Department for External Church Relations; Metropolitan Valentin (Mischuk); Metropolitan Arseny of Istra, first vicar of the Patriarch; over fifteen archbishops and bishops; representatives of the Local Orthodox Churches of Alexandria, Antioch, Serbia, Jerusalem, Bulgaria, and the Czech Lands and Slovakia; and abbots of the stavropegic monasteries.

Praying at the service were hegumenesses of convents, deans of the Moscow church districts and rectors of Moscow churches, clerics of Moscow and the Moscow region, members of the Moscow

parish councils, staff members of the Synodal departments, representatives of the Orthodox youth organizations, and many pilgrims and parishioners.

The choir of the Cathedral Church conducted by Ilya Tolkachev sang liturgical hymns. The service was broadcast live on TV Center channel with comments of Nikolai Derzhavin and on Soyuz TV channel.

By tradition, for reading from the Gospel His Holiness used the old Gospel Book that dates back to the time of the Empress Yelizaveta Petrovna. It was bequeathed by the late Metropolitan Pitirim (Nechaev) to the Cathedral of Christ the Saviour and transferred there from the Monastery of St Joseph of Volokolamsk. The Gospel Book is brought out from the sanctuary with the blessing of the late Patriarch Alexy II only twice a year, on Great Vespers of the Nativity of Christ and of Pascha.

After Paschal Vespers, Metropolitan Juvenaly of Krutitsy and Kolomna greeted Patriarch Kirill with the radiant feast of Pascha on behalf of the Holy Synod and the whole Russian Orthodox Church, saying in particular:

“We celebrate Pascha and recall centenaries of many events. We thank the Lord for the re-establishment of the Patriarchal office in the Russian Orthodox Church and pray for many new martyrs and confessors of the Russian Church through whose exploits and deeds it is experiencing a revival.”

Greeting Patriarch Kirill were representatives of the Orthodox youth associations and organizations, hierarchs, representatives of the Local Orthodox Churches, clerics and laymen.

His Holiness addressed the worshippers with a primatial homily and gave them his blessing.

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