



## **DECR chairman congratulates Primates of the Local Orthodox Churches on the Passover of Christ**

*Metropolitan Hilarion of Volokolamsk sent the following greeting with the Resurrection of Christ to His Holiness Patriarch Bartholomew I of Constantinople, His Beatitude Pope and Patriarch Theodore II of Alexandria, His Beatitude Patriarch John X of Antioch, His Beatitude Patriarch Theophilos III of Jerusalem, His Holiness and Beatitude Catholicos Patriarch Ilia II of Georgia, His Holiness Patriarch Irenej of Serbia, His Beatitude Patriarch Daniel of Romania, His Holiness Patriarch Neofit of Bulgaria, His Beatitude Archbishop Chrysostomos II of Cyprus, His Beatitude Archbishop Hyeronimos II of Athens and All Greece, His Beatitude Archbishop Anastasios of Tirana and All Albania, His Beatitude Metropolitan Sawa of Warsaw and All Poland, His Beatitude Metropolitan Rastislav of the Czech Lands and Slovakia, and His Beatitude Metropolitan Tikhon of All America and Canada:*

On this blessed day of the great triumph of life over death, please accept my heartfelt congratulations on the holy Passover of Christ:

**CHRIST IS RISEN!**

“O Passover, release from sorrow! For today from the tomb, as from a chamber of repose, hath Christ shone forth, and hath filled the women with joy, saying: Proclaim the glad tidings to the apostles!” (Canticle for Pascha). Joy in the risen Lord is the fundamental motive of Christian piety, for “if Christ has not been raised, then our proclamation has been in vain” (1 Cor 15:14).

“Christ has been raised from the dead, the first fruits of those who have died” (1 Cor 15:20), so that he may raise us up with him, “that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works” (Titus 2:14). According to St. Symeon the New Theologian, he who has acquired active faith is vouchsafed by Christ to see with his spiritual eyes within himself “the living Christ who is immortal and incorruptible” (Homily 42).

I prayerfully beseech the risen Christ that he fill your heart with Paschal joy and send down his abundant aid in your lofty Primatial ministry.

With reverential love in the Lord,

**+ Hilarion**

**Metropolitan of Volokolamsk**

**Chairman**

**Department for External Church Relations**

**Moscow Patriarchate**

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