



His Holiness Patriarch Kirill chairs regular session of Supreme Church Council



On 4 April 2017, the Supreme Church Council of the Russian Orthodox Church held its regular session at the Cathedral of Christ the Saviour in Moscow under the chairmanship of His Holiness Patriarch Kirill of Moscow and All Russia.

Prior to the meeting, His Holiness Patriarch Kirill said a requiem litiya for the victims of the terrorist attack in St. Petersburg.

Opening the session, the Primate of the Russian Orthodox Church addressed all those present, saying in particular:

“Education is the issue we consider almost at every session. Today we also have some related items on our agenda, and before we begin the discussion, I would like to share with you some of my thoughts.

“There are still some people who have stereotyped ideas of the soviet times, alleging that education is in conflict with religion. This point of view has new aspects these days; and attempts are being made to add it to the public agenda. Yet, it is quite obvious that this point of view is erroneous. The Russian Orthodox Church believes that the result of the educational system’s work is the balanced development of human personality. We take no interest in how many hours the school curriculum allots to teaching religious culture, in spite of what some may say. Nowadays people are to be competent in both natural sciences and the humanities, as well as in religious matters, regardless of their own beliefs. Gaps in knowledge in every sphere are a disgrace for a person. The human being created in the image and according to the likeness of God must strive to learn more about the world around him/her. As for those who are ignorant in religious matters, they can fall victim to some extremist recruiters.

“It is impossible to exclude religion from the worldview, just as it is impossible to exclude from it the knowledge in mathematics or physics. In this issue there is an understanding between the Church and the state, as well as between the Church and tens of thousands of parents who choose the subject ‘Orthodox Culture’ for their children to learn at school.

“The establishment of the dissertation council for theology was an important achievement. The first thesis on theology in our country will be submitted for defence on June 1, this year, and I would like to say that this is an event of great significance for the Russian education.

“One cannot deny that education has a pedagogical function. It is a process of interpersonal communication, unthinkable without ethical norms. The ethical and moral component must be the fundamental one in this interaction. Far too long we had an ideological vacuum in the sphere of education. Yet, it is widely known that the holy place is never empty, and hence school was regarded as a place for providing certain educational services, and not as a place for developing personality in a balanced way. These are the costs of commercialization of the educational system, which cannot be a market sector, simply because human being is not a production unit.

“We have come to the point of entering a new stage of church-state cooperation in the sphere of education. It is necessary to unite all healthy forces of our society that want the educational system to develop in a comprehensive manner. Therefore, it is not fortuitous that education has been the major item on the agenda of the Supreme Church Council for years... At today’s meeting we will also discuss the matters pertaining to the educational system that we are building up within the Russian Orthodox Church.”

The agenda of the meeting includes the following items:

- The implementation of decisions of the Supreme Church Council of the Russian Orthodox

Church and the Bishops' Council;

- The church-wide implementation of the Regulations on the Assignment of Graduates of Educational Institutions Preparing Specialists in Catechization, Mission, Youth Work and Social Ministry;
- The work of the Church-Public Council for the Alcohol-Related Threats Protection.

The Supreme Church Council chaired by His Holiness Patriarch Kirill 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 Klement of Kaluga and Borovsk, chairman of the ROC Publishing Council;

Metropolitan Arseny of Istra, Patriarchal First Vicar for Moscow;

Metropolitan Ioann of Belgorod and Stary Oskol, chairman of the Synodal Missionary Department;

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

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

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

Bishop Ignaty of Vyborg and Priozersk, chairman of the Synodal Department for Youth Affairs;

Bishop Panteleimon of Orekhovo-Zuyevo, 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 Bogorodsk, head of the Moscow Patriarchate's Administration for Institutions Abroad;

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-Society and Media Relations.

Invited to attend the session were Bishop Savva of Voskresensk, first deputy chancellor of the Moscow

Patriarchate; Archimandrite Savva (Tutunov), deputy chancellor of the Moscow Patriarchate; Archpriest Maxim Kozlov, first deputy chairman of the Education Committee of the Russian Orthodox Church; Hegumen Petr (Yeremeyev), first deputy chairman of the Education Committee of the Russian Orthodox Church; Hegumeness Ksenia (Chernega), head of the Moscow Patriarchate's Legal Service; and Mr. Alexander Schipkov, first deputy chairman of the Synodal Department for Church-Society and Media Relations.

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