Metropolitan Hilarion of Volokolamsk takes part in the opening of the Russian church in Cyprus



On 27 March 2017, Metropolitan Hilarion of Volokolamsk, chairman of the Moscow Patriarchate's Department for External Church Relations and rector of Ss Cyril and Methodius Theological Institute of Postgraduate Studies, while in Cyprus with the blessing of His Holiness Patriarch Kirill of Moscow and All Russia, visited the metochion of the Kykkos Monastery in Nicosia where Metropolitan Nikiforos of Kykkos, hegumen of the abode, gave a reception in honor of the guests from Russia.

Later that day the Memorandum on Cooperation between Ss Cyril and Methodius Theological Institute of Postgraduate Studies and the Theological Faculty of the University of Nicosia was signed by Metropolitan Hilarion of Volokolamsk, rector of Ss Cyril and Methodius Institute, and Mr. Antonis Polemitis, chief executive officer of the University of Nicosia.

In the evening of the same day the DECR chairman took part in the opening of the Russian Church of St Andrew the First-Called and All the Saints Who Shone Forth in the Russian Land. The church was built

in the city of Episkopion on the initiative of Metropolitan Isaias of Tamasos and Oreini for the Russian-speaking community. Among those who attended the ceremony were Metropolitan Makarios of Nairobi (Patriarchate of Alexandria), Metropolitan Niphon of Philipopolis (Patriarchate of Antioch), Metropolitan Timotheos of Bostra (Patriarchate of Jerusalem), Archbishop Amvrosy of Peterhof (Moscow Patriarchate), Bishop Antonije of Moravic*í* (Serbian Patriarchate), Metropolitan Nikolaj of Plovdiv (Bulgarian Patriarchate), Metropolitan Theokletos of Vrestheni (Church of Greece), hierarchs of the Church of Cyprus, as well as Mr. Nicos Anastasiades, President of the Republic of Cyprus, Mr. Demetris Syllouris, President of the House of Representatives of Cyprus, Mr. Stanislav Osadchy, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Russian Federation to the Republic of Cyprus, and representatives of the local authorities, clergy, public organizations and the mass media.

During a press-conference that preceded the ceremony Metropolitan Hilarion answered questions from the Cyprian and Russian journalists. Metropolitan Isaias of Tamasos and Oreini opened the celebrations by performing the rite of blessing water. During the ceremony, the President of Cyprus presented Mr. Vyacheslav Zarenkov, ktetor of the church, with the highest award of the Republic of Cyprus, the Order of Merit. As Mr. Anastasiades noted, the church will be a visible sign of the close spiritual bond between the two Orthodox peoples, promoting their historical relationships, mutual understanding, and cooperation.

Metropolitan Hilarion of Volokolamsk greeted all those present, saying in particular:

“On behalf of His Holiness Patriarch Kirill of Moscow and All Russia I would like to warmly congratulate you on this remarkable event – the opening of the first Russian church on the island of Cyprus.

“From now on this church will be a spiritual home for thousands of the Russian-speaking people who reside in Cyprus or visit it. It will be a token of the lasting friendship between the peoples of Russia and Cyprus and of the centuries-old ties between the Russian Orthodox Church and the Church of Cyprus.”

“On behalf of His Holiness Patriarch Kirill and the whole Russian Orthodox Church, and on my behalf, I would like to express my heartfelt gratitude to His Eminence Metropolitan Isaias of Tamasos and Oreini for constructing the first Russian church in the Cyprian land. Dear Vladyka, you have showed your love for the Russian Orthodox Church not in word, but in deed. And the seed that had been sown during your studies at the Moscow Theological Academy brought forth an hundredfold fruit.”

Metropolitan Hilarion also thanked Mr. Vyacheslav Zarenkov, ktetor of the church, expressed his appreciation to the President of Cyprus and other Cyprian statesmen for rendering support to the Russian-speaking Orthodox faithful living on the island, and said in conclusion:

“I would like to wish to all the Orthodox Christians living on this island, both Greek and Russian, to preserve firmly the holy faith… If someday, God forbid, the Cyprian people will yield to the persuasions of those Western liberals who say that it is possible to live without faith, then there will be neither Cyprus nor Cypriots. The holy faith of Christ has been saving these blessed people for two thousand years and will continue to guide them until the end of time. May the Lord preserve the island of Cyprus, its people and all our Orthodox believers in peace, accord and love.”

A concert of religious music concluded the ceremony. Among those who performed at the concert was the choir of the St. Petersburg Theological Academy.

DECR Communication Service

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