



## **DECR chairman sends greetings to His Beatitude Patriarch John X of Great Antioch and All the East on the anniversary of his enthronement**

*Metropolitan Hilarion of Volokolamsk, chairman of the Moscow Patriarchate's Department for External Church Relations, congratulated the Primate of the Orthodox Church of Antioch on the anniversary of his elevation to the Patriarchal throne. The text of the message is given below.*

Your Beatitude,

Please accept my heartfelt greetings with the anniversary of your elevation to the ancient and glorious Throne of the Great Antioch and All the East.

As a successor of the Holy Leaders of the Apostles, Ss Peter and Paul, you strive to follow their commandments, carrying out *the ministry of reconciliation* (2 Cor 5:18) and shepherding God's flock *not by constraint, but willingly* (1 Pet 5:2), visiting the faithful in the liberated cities and villages and taking tender paternal care of them. In your loving heart there is a place for everyone who appeals to you for help and advice.

In my capacity as chairman of the Moscow Patriarchate's Department for External Church Relations I would like to express my appreciation for your efforts aimed at strengthening the traditionally fraternal relations between the Russian Orthodox Church and the Orthodox Church of Antioch and for your concern for the Russian-speaking Orthodox Christians living in the countries of the canonical jurisdiction of the See of Antioch.

On this memorable day I prayerfully wish to Your Beatitude peace and prosperity, as well as physical and spiritual strength and God's help in your Primatial ministry for the benefit of the Holy Church of Antioch.

With respectful love in the Lord,