



## **DECR chairman sends Christmas greetings to Primates of the Local Orthodox Churches**

*Metropolitan Hilarion, chairman of the Moscow Patriarchate's Department for External Church Relations, sent greetings with the Nativity of Christ to the Primates of the Local Orthodox Churches: 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 Ilya 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 Hyeronimus 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. The text reads as follows:*

Please accept my heartfelt congratulations on the holy and saving feast of the Nativity in the flesh of our Lord Jesus Christ.

“Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will to men” (Lk 2:14). These wondrous angelic glad tidings, which first resounded in the vicinity of the city of David on the Holy Night of Christ's Nativity, fill the hearts of Christians with reverent awe and hope in the almighty power, mercy and unknowable love of God towards the human race.

“And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, full of grace and truth” (Jn 1:14). For our salvation “God, who is before all the ages,” was born on earth as a “little Child” in order to preach salvation to all that are near and that are far off, and through his Cross and Resurrection open up to the human race the gates of the kingdom of God.

“Sing unto the Lord, all the whole earth, and praise him in song with joy, O ye people: For he hath glorified himself.” Joy fills the whole earth today, and Orthodox Christians in all corners of the world hasten to congratulate each other with the coming of the Saviour into the world. May the Divine Infant who has been born grant to You his peace “which passeth all understanding” (Phil 4:7), may he increase and strengthen your bodily powers for the many and beneficent years of your primatial ministry.

With reverential love in the Lord,

**+Hilarion**

**Metropolitan of Volokolamsk**

**Chairman**

**Department for External Church Relations**

**Moscow Patriarchate**

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