



DECR chairman greets Catholicos-Patriarch of the Assyrian Church of the East with his 75th birthday

In his message to Mar Gewargis III Sliwa, Catholicos-Patriarch of the Assyrian Church of the East, Metropolitan Hilarion of Volokolamsk, chairman of the Moscow Patriarchate's Department for External Church Relations, congratulated His Holiness on his 75th birthday. The text of the letter is given below.

Your Holiness,

Please accept my sincere greetings with your 75th birthday.

From a young age, you have devoted your life to God, being a workman of Christ's vineyard *that needeth not to be ashamed* (2 Tim 2:15). Having accepted the lot of pastoral and archpastoral ministry while being far from your native land, you have always been faithful to your biblical homeland, having won love and high spiritual authority of the thousands of your compatriots. Today, notwithstanding the terrible plight of your flock persecuted for the name of the Lord in their own land, you manage to strengthen the external ties of the Assyrian Church of the East, attaching importance, among other matters, to the relations with the Moscow Patriarchate. It is my sincere hope that this fruitful cooperation will continue to develop, promoting the God-commanded Christian unity.

I cordially wish to Your Holiness good health, strength and God's unceasing help in your lofty ministry as Primate of the Assyrian Church of the East for many years.

With love in the Lord,

/+Hilarion/

Metropolitan of Volokolamsk

Chairman

Department for External Church Relations

Moscow Patriarchate