Concert to mark the 70th birthday of His Holiness Patriarch Kirill takes place at the Cathedral of Christ the Saviour



On 22 November 2016, a gala concert to mark the 70th birthday of His Holiness Patriarch Kirill of Moscow and All Russia took place at the Hall of Church Council of the Cathedral of Christ the Saviour.

Sitting in the first row were His Holiness Patriarch Kirill of Moscow and All Russia, Russian President Vladimir Putin, Belorussian President Alexander Lukashenko, Russian Prime Minister Dmitry Medvedev and his wife, Chair of the Federation Council of the Federal Assembly Ms. Valentina Matvienko, His Beatitude Pope and Patriarch Theodoros II of Alexandria and All Africa; His Holiness and Beatitude Catholicos Patriarch Ilia II of All Georgia; His Holiness Patriarch Irenaeus of Serbia; His Beatitude Archbishop Anastasios of Tirana and All Albania; His Beatitude Metropolitan Rastislav of the Czech Lands and Slovakia; His Beatitude Metropolitan Tikhon of All America and Canada; His Holiness Supreme Patriarch and Catholicos Karekin II of All Armenians, Cardinal Kurt Koch, President of the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity, Sheikh ul-Islam Allashukur Pashazade, head of the

Administration of Muslims of the Caucasus, and members of the Holy Synod of the Russian Orthodox Church.

Also attending the concert were members of the delegations of the Local Orthodox Churches, bishops and clerics of the Russian Orthodox Church, representatives of traditional religions of Russia and of non-Orthodox confessions, diplomats, heads of governmental structures, of public and charity organizations, and workers of science and culture

Head of the Russian Cinematoghaphers' Union Nikita Mikhalkov opened the concert by addressing Russian President, His Holiness, Russian Prime-Minister, Belorussian President and Chair of the Federation Council and said: 'Today we and millions of TV viewers honour and congratulate our Patriarch Kirill on the wonderful jubilee – his 70th birthday. We will present the key events from the life of our Patriarch and we believe that people in this hall, at the TV sets throughout the country and all Orthodox Christians in the world will again see Patriarch Kirill's power, intellect, perseverance and faithfulness to his ministry.'

Shown on the screen was chronicle of the Local Council of 2009 at which Metropolitan Kirill of Smolensk was elected Patriarch of Moscow and All Russia.

The Moscow Synodal Choir conducted by Alexei Puzakov sang 'Praise the Name of the Lord' by Sergei Rachmaninov.

Addressing the Primate of the Russian Orthodox Church President Vladimir Putin, said: 'For millions of people throughout the world you personify the high authority of the Russian Orthodox Church being a dedicated successor to its traditions and outstanding labours of its champions who had made invaluable contribution to the affirmation of Christian values and played great role in the establishment and development of the Russian state.

"The Russian Orthodox Church is a great preacher of love to the Fatherland and its mighty defender which has always upheld principles of the good, truth, and faithfulness to our country. Along with our traditional confessions the Russian Orthodox Church is a major spiritual mainstay of our people and our statehood. This is especially important today when the world community encounters new difficult challenges and needs as never before mutual understanding, accord and trust among countries and nations.'

Russian President awarded His Holiness Patriarch Kirill with the Order 'For Merit to the Fatherland', 1st class.

Belorussian President Alexander Lukashenko also congratulated the Primate of the Russian Orthodox Church. He said: ‘Your Holiness! As you know, you enjoy well-deserved recognition and popular love in Byelorussia. Christians, Muslims, and representatives of other religions know you thanks to your work and kindness to our country. Any your visit is an event and wherever you celebrate divine services, be it in the legendary Polotsk, heroic Brest, ancient Vitebsk, or the capital city of Minsk, people meet you as their good shepherd and courageous guide. The Orthodox Church under your primatial leadership promotes spiritual unity of the Slavic peoples of Byelorussia and Russia based on such Christian values as peacefulness, mutual aid, humanism and justice.’

His Holiness Patriarch Kirill addressed the audience, cordially thanked the speakers for their kind words and shared his views on the tasks of church ministry. He said: ‘May the Lord bless our Fatherland, our historical Rus’ and all Slavic people who now live in the independent states, but have common historical sources. I do hope that our onward movement will be peaceful, tranquil and smooth.’

The Moscow Synodal Choir conducted by Alexei Puzakov sang “Many Years” by Sergei Prokofiev. Also performing in the concert were the Symphony Orchestra conducted by a people’s artist Yuri Bashmet, the Kuban Cossak Choir, honoured artists of Russia Yevgeny Dyatlov and Olga Borodina, people’s artist Inna Churikova, ‘Domisolka’ children’s ensemble.

The concert was broadcast by Russia Kultura TV channel.

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