Solemn celebration on Patriarch Kirill's 70th birthday in Church of Christ the Savior



On November 20, 2016, the 22th Sunday after Pentecost, His Holiness Patriarch Kirill of Moscow and All Russia, together with primates and heads of Local Orthodox Churches, an assembly of the Russian Orthodox Church bishops and priests, celebrated the Divine Liturgy at the Church of Christ the Saviour. It was his 70th birthday.

Presiding over the liturgy were His Beatitude Theodore II, Pope and Patriarch of Alexandria and All Africa; His Beatitude Theophilos III, Patriarch of the Holy City of Jerusalem and All Palestine, His Holiness Kirill, Patriarch of Moscow and All Russia, His Holiness and Beatitude Iliya II, Catholicos-Patriarch of All Georgia; His Holiness Irenaeus, Patriarch of Serbia, Archbishop of Pec, Metropolitan of Belgrade and Karlovcy; His Beatitude Chrysostomos II, Archbishop of New Justiniana and All Cyprus; His Beatitude Anastasios, Archbishop of Tirana and All Albania; His Beatitude Sava, Metropolitan of Warsaw and All Poland; His Beatitude Rostislav, Metropolitan of the Czech Lands and Slovakia; and His Beatitude Tikhon, Archbishop of Washington, Metropolitan of All America and Canada.

The Primates were assisted by

Metropolitan Emmanuel of France (Orthodox Church of Constantinople), Metropolitan Nifon of Targoviste (Romanian Orthodox Church), Metropolitan Anthony of Western and Central Europe (Bulgarian Orthodox Church), and Metropolitan Ignatius of Demetrias (Greek Orthodox Church);

permanent members of the ROC Holy Synod – His Beatitude Metropolitan Onufry of Kiev and All Ukraine, Metropolitan Juvenaly of Krutitsy and Kolomna, Metropolitan Vladimir of Kishinev and All Moldova, Metropolitan Alexander of Astana and Kazakhstan, Metropolitan Vikenty of Tashkent and Uzbekistan, Metropolitan Varsonofy of St. Petersburg and Ladoga, Metropolitan Pavel of Minsk and Zaslavsk, and Metropolitan Hilarion of Volokolamsk;

assembly of the ROC bishops, representatives of Local Orthodox Churches to the Moscow Patriarchate, heads of the Moscow Patriarchate synodal departments and representations abroad, abbots and father superiors of the ROC monasteries, Local Orthodox Churches' delegation members in holy orders, members of the Moscow diocesan council, and clergy of the diocese of Moscow.

Present at the liturgy were V. Volodin, State Duma speaker; S. Kirienko, first deputy head of the Presidential Administration; S. Prikhodko, deputy prime minister, V. Medinsky, minister of culture; A. Beglov, presidential envoy to the Central Region; A. Klishas, member of the Council of the Federation; L. Slutsky, chairman of the State Duma committee for international affairs; Moscow Mayor S. Sobyanin, and representatives of state and public organizations.

Among the numerous worshippers were V. Legoida, head of the synodal department for the Church's relations with society and mass medial; abbots and abbesses of monasteries, staff members of synodal departments, and representatives Orthodox youth organizations.

Singing at the liturgy were the Patriarchal choir of the Church of Christ the Saviour, the monastery choir of the St. Sergius Laura of the Holy Trinity, and a combined choir of the Sunday and church music schools in Moscow and Moscow Region.

The service was broadcast live by the Russian Orthodox Church Information Agency through the Spas, Soyuz and Tsargrad TV channels as well as the ROC official website patriarchia. ru.

After the Prayer of Fervent Supplication, which included special petitions for the good health of the Primate of the Russian Church, Patriarch Kirill lifted up a prayer for peace in Ukraine. Metropolitan Onufry of Kiev and All Ukraine read a prayer for Patriarchate Kirill.

After the Divine Liturgy Metropolitan Onufry read out a congratulatory message to Patriarch Kirill from the ROC Holy Synod. In conclusion of the congratulations Metropolitan Onufry said, ‘Your Holiness, on your 70th birthday, the Holy Synod is asking you to vest on yourself the insignia of the highest award of the Russian Orthodox Church – the order of St. Andrew the First-Called’.

According to the Provision on the Russian Orthodox Church’s Awards approved by the 2013 Bishops’ Council, the Patriarch of Moscow and All Russia, in ascending to the patriarchal throne ‘as the supreme chief of all the orders, vests on himself the insignia of the Order of St. Andrew the First-Called’. During the enthronement of Patriarch Kirill, the Provision for the Orders did not contain this item. Patriarch Kirill accepted the order’s insignia from Metropolitan Onufry with gratitude.

Then His Holiness was greeted by the State Duma Speaker V. Volodin, who said in particular, ‘Your Holiness, we know that our President Vladimir Vladimirovich Putin has congratulated you. Today he is on a trip abroad. On our part, we ask your permission to congratulate you on this auspicious and special day in your life. For over 7 years you have been the Primate of the Russian Orthodox Church. It is difficult to overestimate your work. You are doing much for the preservation of our tradition, our spiritual values. A great number of projects are implemented today by the Russian Orthodox Church headed by you in the fields of culture and education. Your contribution to peacemaking work is priceless. Speaking about your work, it is very difficult to enumerate all its sides… Allow me to wish you good health in your service for the good of our country’.

Metropolitan Emmanuel of France read out a congratulatory message from His Holiness Bartholomew, Patriarch of Constantinople.

Patriarch Kirill addressed the congregation.

In the gallery of the Church of Christ the Savior, congratulations to Patriarch Kirill were offered by participants in the youth movement ‘Orthodox Volunteers’ and Orthodox young people in Moscow.

Patriarchal Press Service

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Photos by Patriarchal Press Service

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