Primate of Russian Orthodox Church meets with Metropolitan Tikhon of All America and Canada



On November 18, 2016, His Holiness Patriarch Kirill of Moscow and All Russia met with His Beatitude Tikhon, Metropolitan of All America and Canada, who came to the Russian Church for the celebrations devoted to Patriarch Kirill's 70th birthday. The meeting took place at the patriarchal residence in the St. Daniel Patriarchal Monastery in Moscow.

His Beatitude Tikhon was accompanied by a delegation including Bishop Daniel of Santa Rosa, Archimandrite Gerasim (Eliel), Archpriest Nazari Polataiko, Archdeacon Joseph Matusiak, reader Roman Ostash, as well as Archpriest Chad Hatfield, chancellor of the St. Vladimir Orthodox Theological Seminary in New York.

The Russian Orthodox Church was represented by Metropolitan Hilarion of Volokolamsk, head of the Moscow Patriarchate department for external church relations (DECR), Bishop Ioann of Naro-Fominsk,

administrator of the Patriarchal Parishes in the USA, Archpriest Nikolay Balashov, DECR vice-chairman, and D. Petrovsky, DECR staff member.

Patriarch Kirill warmly welcomed the guest, saying, ‘Thank you for having found an opportunity to join me in prayer on the occasion of the good round data I am celebrating’.

He pointed to the significance of bilateral relations between the Russian Orthodox Church and the Orthodox Church in America. ‘The historical sources of these good relations are associated with our common great saints – St. Tikhon, Patriarch of Moscow, St. Herman of Alaska, St. Innocent and the Holy Martyr Ioann Kochurov’, His Holiness reminded, ‘Their names are in the calendar of our both Churches; we pray to them, also asking for their intercession before God for the prosperity of the American and Russian Orthodox Churches, for the preservation of good relations, which have been established’.

In this connection, Patriarch Kirill mentioned the conference which took place on November 9 in the city of Kadom, Ryazan Region, and was devoted to St. Herman of Alaska who was born there. The conference was attended by theologians and scholars from Russia and the United States of America.

In the course of the talk, Patriarch Kirill stressed the importance of maintaining bilateral relations in the work of the ROC New York representation and the OCA Moscow representation. ‘We grieve over the timeless demise of Father Alexander who headed your Moscow representation. He made his very quiet but really positive contribution to the development of relations between our two Churches’, he said.

His Holiness also noted that the Russian Orthodox Church was delighted to host pilgrims from America. ‘We believe the visits of people from your Church to Rus’ are also a manifestation of our historical relations and a testimony to the importance of our bilateral relations’, he continued.

He made a special mention of the importance of students’ exchange for maintaining relationships between Local Churches. ‘We are glad to accept a new student from the Orthodox Church in America. We also note the important role of the St. Vladimir Seminary for the development of theological knowledge’, he said giving a special welcome to the chancellor of this educational institution, Archpriest Chad Hatfield.

‘Relations between our Churches are developing very benevolently. We are in cooperation, including on the level of pan-Orthodox discussion on the problems involved in the life of Orthodox Churches in America. I am delighted at the opportunity to discuss with you and your brothers a whole number of issues on the agenda of all the Orthodox Churches, as well all those concerning our bilateral relations’, His Holiness said.

Metropolitan Tikhon in his turn expressed appreciation for the warm welcome in Moscow and the invitation to join Patriarch Kirill's 70th birthday celebrations. 'I am looking forward to celebrating with you and other Primates of Local Orthodox Churches', he said.

His Beatitude conveyed to Patriarch Kirill best regards from the Holy Synod of the Orthodox Church in America. 'We all, both the clergy and monastics, join you in prayer. The Orthodox Church in America, as the youngest Local Orthodox Church, believe it a great honour to take part in this historic event along with heads and representatives of old Churches and great Patriarchs who have gathered together in Moscow. Just as the celebration of the 1025th anniversary of the Baptism of Rus' in 2013, the events taking place now show how much you care for the unity of the Churches and the building of the spirit of reconciliation'.

His Beatitude Tikhon stated that 'Throughout North America people are well aware of your brotherly attitude to our Orthodox Church… Our clergy as well as our faithful have seen the great commitment and selflessness with which you carry out your pastoral ministry, how much you are engaged in the apostolic work as Primate of the Russian Orthodox Church; they saw your efforts in your capacity as chairman of the Department for External Church Relations, saw your service as a representative of monasticism. Regrettably, the role played by monastics in the apostolic missionary work is often forgotten. You, Your Holiness, have always advocated this path'.

According to the Primate of the Orthodox Church in America, this is attested in particular by the international conference held with the blessing of His Holiness Patriarch Kirill this year on the Millennium of the Presence of Russian Monks on Mount Athos. 'This presence on the Holy Mountain brought forth its fruits, for instance, in the person of St. Sergius of Radonezh and other monastic saints, and in the form of the work of missionaries who went to Alaska to sow the seed of the faith there. We join you in your witness to these saints', His Beatitude continued, expressing hope for the further development of fraternal relations between the two Churches.

The two Primates also discussed a wide range of issues concerning the bilateral relations between the Russian Orthodox Church and the Orthodox Church in America and the pan-Orthodox cooperation.

DECR Communication Service

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