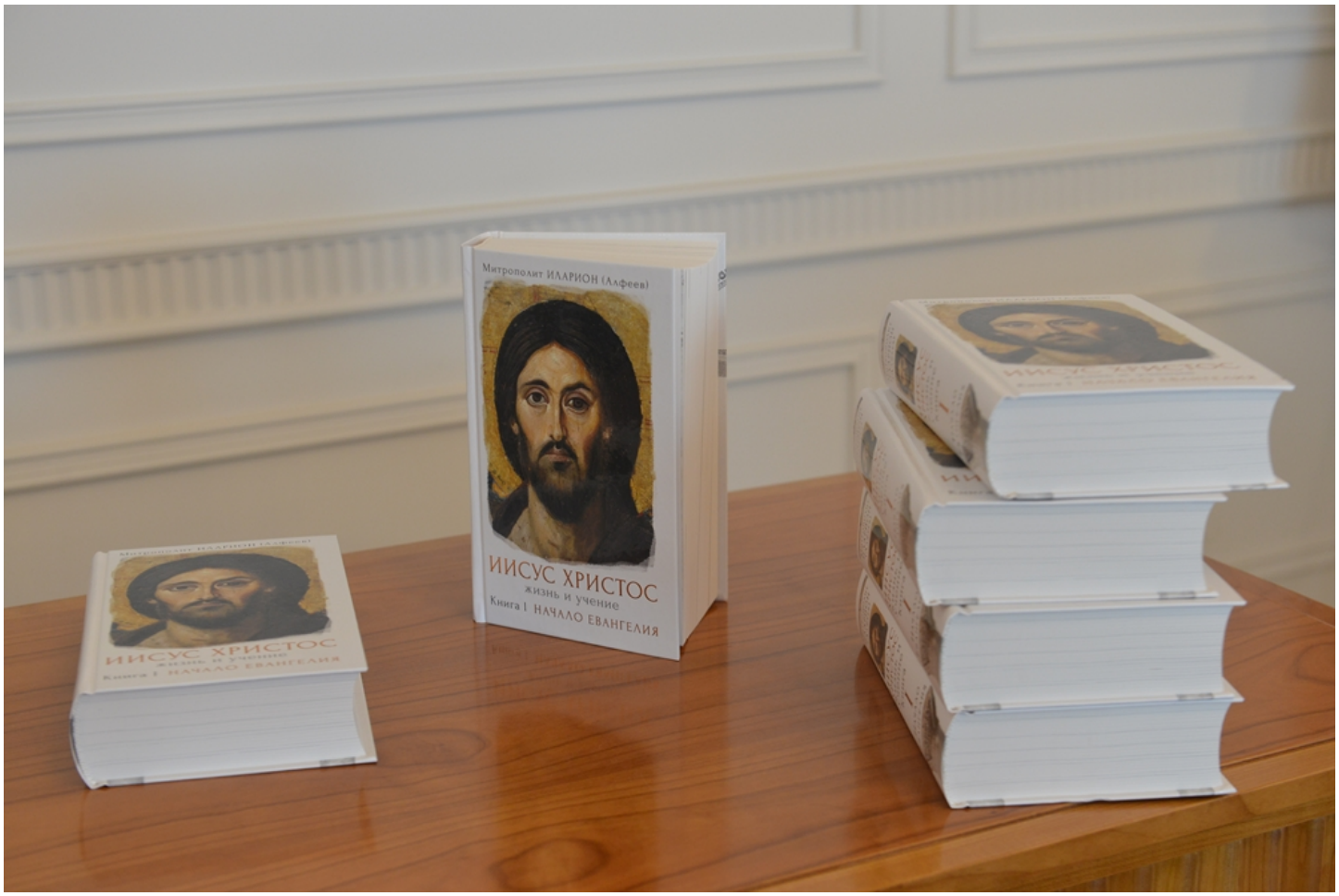
New book by Metropolitan Hilarion of Volokolamsk presented in Moscow



On 22 July 2016, the presentation of a new book “The Beginning of the Gospel” by Metropolitan Hilarion of Volokolamsk, chairman of the Department for External Church Relations, rector of Ss Cyril and Methodius Theological Institute of Postgraduate Studies, chairman of the Synodal Biblical and Theological Commission, took place at the assembly hall of Ss Cyril and Methodius Theological Institute.

It is the first book in the series of six volumes entitled “Jesus Christ. Life and Teaching.” The series will be continued by the following books: “Sermon on the Mount,” “Miracles of Jesus,” “Parables of Jesus,” “The Lamb of God. Jesus in the Gospel of John,” and “Death and Resurrection.”

Among those who attended the presentation were hierarchs and clergymen of the Russian Orthodox Church, representatives of other Local Orthodox Churches, journalists, and public figures.

In his address, Bishop Tikhon of Yegorievsk, chairman of the Patriarchal Council for Culture, noted the importance of the book for scholars, as well as for common readers who want to find out Who the Saviour was, and for Orthodox Christians who feel the strong need to affirm their faith, especially these days.

“We are very glad that we managed to publish the first volume before the celebration of Metropolitan Hilarion’s jubilee,” Bishop Tikhon said, “I would like to wholeheartedly congratulate him and express my sincere admiration. We are deeply grateful to Vladyka Hilarion for finding time to reflect and tell to his students, to his flock and to the whole Church about the most important things.”

Mr. Vladimir Legoyda, chairman of the Synodal Department for Church-Society and Media Relations, noted that the presentation of the book “The Beginning of the Gospel” was a significant event for the book-publishing industry, as well as for the Orthodox and the entire Christian world.

Addressing all those present, Metropolitan Hilarion said in particular:

“I am often asked, ‘Who do you write your books for?’ I have no particular addressee. First and foremost, I write books for myself, in order to understand some important topic, to dot all the i’s and cross all the t’s. I never start writing until I know what I want to say.

“It took me much time to come to writing the book that is being presented today. Albeit I have written it rather quickly, the journey to it has taken at least a quarter of a century, or maybe more. In the early 90s, when St Tikhon’s University was established, I was invited to deliver lectures there on the New Testament. It was the first time I got acquainted with the scholarly literature surrounding the Gospel. However, the Patristics were my academic specialization: I studied the teaching of the Holy Fathers, wrote books on them, and therefore did not pay serious attention to the writings on the New Testament.

“Some three years ago, under the auspices of His Holiness Patriarch Kirill and the Supreme Church Council, an implementation of a large-scale project aimed at preparing course books for bachelor’s degree programmes of the Russian Orthodox Church’s theological schools began. We considered all available materials, and it so happened that I had to write a course book on the Four Gospels myself. As you understand, in order to write a course book, one first needs to undertake thorough studies. So I, at a rather mature age, began to study the academic literature on the New Testament, a new sphere for me.

“At that stage I realized that the modern Western literature on the New Testament offers a great number of concepts for studing the New Testament texts.

“In my book I say that in order to understand the Gospel and the Person Which stands behind it, the

Person of Jesus Christ, we must always use two keys. It is like a safe that has two locks; if you only have the key from the first lock, you will not be able to open the safe; the door will also stay closed if you only have the key from the second lock.

“The fist key is the certitude that Jesus Christ was a real historical character, that He was man and had all human feelings, emotions, sufferings, the so-called passionless passions, according to the Holy Fathers. He was a man who could be happy and cry, be tired and angry. It is all in the Gospel... Jesus Christ is a real human being. This is the first key.

“The second key is the belief that Jesus Christ was God incarnate. It is in this light that all we read in the Gospel makes sense: Christ’s miracles, His parables, and, what is most important, the story of His suffering, death and resurrection. As we know, a great many people were crucified. For instance, historians write that three thousand people were crucified after Spartacus’ rebellion. A great many people died a violent, unjust death; yet no other death left such a mark in the human history as the death of Jesus Christ.”

Metropolitan Hilarion cordially thanked Bishop Tikhon of Yegorievsk and the Publishing House of the Sretensky Monastery, which he heads, for many years of cooperation and answered numerous questions from those present.

DECR Communication Service

Source: https://mospat.ru/en/news/49321/