His Holiness Patriarch Kirill greets Primate of the Orthodox Church of Constantinople with his Nameday

The Primate of the Russian Orthodox Church sent congratulatory message to His Holiness Patriarch Bartholomew of Constantinople on the occasion of his Nameday. The text is given below.

Your Holiness, beloved Brother in the Lord and Concelebrant:

On the commemoration day of St. Bartholomew, the holy apostle of Christ and the great sun of the universe, I wholeheartedly greet You and congratulate You on Your Nameday.

Your heavenly patron had courageously, sacrificially and zealously acted at the Saviour's behest to His disciples 'Go ye unto all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature' (Mt 16:15). Taking the laudable Bartholomew as a guide, You aspire to shew forth to the near and the far ones 'the praises of Him who hath called upon you out of darkness into his marvelous light' (1 Pet 2:9) and 'feed the flock of God not by constraint, but willingly, neither as being lords over God's heritage, but being examples of the flock' (cf. 1 Pet 5:2-3).

The Lord has entrusted You with heading the centuries glorious Holy Church of Constantinople which with the apostolic zeal had been bringing the good news of Christ to different nations, the Slavs among them. The great event of the Baptism of Russia and the ordering of the church life in this land had been performed by bishops and clerics sent from Constantinople. St. Anthony had founded Russian monasticism in the caves in Kiev and brought his experience of life on the Holy Mountain of Athos which used to be in spiritual care of the Patriarchs of Constantinople since olden times.

The Lord has granted many gifts to Your Holiness. Your devout ministry as Patriarch of Constantinople, kindness and openness attract people encouraging them to heed Your homilies which adorn the Church of Christ.

May 'the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only wise God' (1 Tim 1:17) keep You by the intercession of the Blessed Virgin Mary and prayers of the all-laudable apostle Bartholomew in spiritual and physical fortitude and help You in Your future Patriarchal labours.

Many and good years to Your Holiness!

With brotherly love in the Lord,

+KIRILL

Patriarch of Moscow and All Russia

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