



## **DECR chairman sends greetings to Metropolitan Amfilohije of Montenegro and Primorje on the occasion of the 30th anniversary of his episcopal consecration and the 25th anniversary of his election to the See of Cetinje**

*Metropolitan Hilarion of Volokolamsk, chairman of the Moscow Patriarchate's Department for External Church Relations, sent a message of greetings to Metropolitan Amfilohije of Montenegro and Primorje. The text of the message is given below.*

Your Eminence, dear Vladyka,

I wholeheartedly congratulate you on the memorable dates, the 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary of your episcopal consecration and the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of your election to the glorious See of Cetinje.

For twenty-five years that have passed since your elevation to this lofty dignity, you have become a true spiritual father for hundreds of thousands of Orthodox Christians in Montenegro. They regard Your Eminence as a worthy successor of your numerous predecessors who shone forth from the holy wine of the Ghost-filled saints of the Njegoš family, brave champions of independence of their people and creators of the state of Montenegro: Metropolitans Danilo Petrović, St Peter of Cetinje and Petar II, mystic and poet.

The Russian Orthodox Church knows you as a tireless zealot who has united the people of God for building up and defending the spiritual house of Orthodoxy in Montenegro, and as an archpastor who courageously struggles for the triumph of God's truth and the preservation of church unity, historical memory and centuries-old Orthodox traditions of his flock. Your work is aimed at protecting the dignity of the Serbian Orthodox Church and the cultural heritage of Orthodoxy in Montenegro, the land of St Simeon the Myrrh-Flowing, which is sanctified by the prayer and heroic deeds of Prince Jovan Vladimir and numerous saints. Thanks to the efforts of Your Eminence, this land is now being adorned by magnificent churches testifying to an important role that the Orthodox Church plays in the life of Montenegro today.

We are grateful to Your Eminence for taking paternal care of the Orthodox Christians from Russia, Ukraine and other countries in the canonical territory of the Moscow Patriarchate, who live in Montenegro. The Russian Orthodox Church particularly appreciates the support that you offer to the

Ukrainian Orthodox faithful who are suffering from the fratricidal strife provoked by the enemies of the Orthodox faith.

On this day of celebration I prayerfully wish Your Eminence peace, physical and spiritual strength, zealousness in your prayer for your pious flock, and God's bountiful help for many and good years of your archpastoral ministry.

With brotherly love in the Lord,

**/+Hilarion/**

**Metropolitan of Volokolamsk**

**Chairman**

**Department for External Church Relations**

**Moscow Patriarchate**

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