



their lives comprise one and the same feat of the service of Christ the Saviour equal to that of the apostles *so that the message of the Lord may spread rapidly and be honoured* (2 Thes. 3:1).

Therefore the memory of the millennium of the repose of the Baptizer of Rus unites in a very special way the faithful of the Russian and Bulgarian Orthodox Churches, just as they are united by their common spiritual tradition which was initiated by the work of enlightenment carried out by Ss Cyril and Methodius Equal-to-the-Apostles and their disciples and which came to Rus through the Bulgarian missionaries who responded to the call of St. Vladimir.

From my heart I wish to the organizers, participants and guests of the Conference inspiration, creative successes and interesting work.

**Metropolitan Hilarion of Volokolamsk**

**Chairman of the Department for External Church Relations**

**Moscow Patriarchate**

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