



Metropolitan Hilarion sends greetings to the Primate of the Bulgarian Orthodox Church with the second anniversary of his enthronement

Metropolitan Hilarion of Volokolamsk, chairman of the Moscow Patriarchate's Department for External Church Relations, congratulated His Holiness Patriarch Neofit of Bulgaria on the second anniversary of his enthronement.

Your Holiness:

Please accept my cordial congratulations on the anniversary of your enthronement to the glorious Bulgarian Patriarchal See.

You have gained experience as a pastor and administrator and sincere love of your flock by your zealous labours in the vineyard of the Holy Church thus having 'a good degree, and great boldness in the faith which is in Jesus Christ' (1 Tim 3:13).

The conciliar mind of the Bulgarian Orthodox Church has regarded you as a worthy successor of the late Patriarch of Bulgaria, Cyril and Maxim of the blessed memory, and of all wise-in-God first hierarchs who have laboured in different times for the establishment and strengthening of Bulgarian Orthodoxy and has entrusted its destiny to prayers and wise guidance of Your Holiness by placing on your shoulders a heavy cross of Patriarchal ministry and fatherly care for the holy churches and monasteries of Bulgaria and for spiritual revival of the Bulgarian people.

By your primatial words and by the example of your pious life you are inspiring your flock to live 'by pureness, by knowledge, by longsuffering, by kindness, by the Holy Spirit, by love unfeigned' (2 Cor 6:6), and pastors to work selflessly 'in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth' (1 Tim 3:15).

The years of your ministry as Patriarch have been marked by consistent development of traditionally good relations with the Russian Orthodox Church. Your participation in the celebration of the 1025th anniversary of the Baptism of Rus' held in Moscow, Kiev and Minsk as well as your irenic visit to the Russian Orthodox Church were very important events.

On this day, solemn and festive for you and for the entire Bulgarian Orthodox Church, I prayerfully wish

you peace, gracious strength and inexhaustible God's help in your Patriarchal ministry.

With respectful love in the Lord,

+ Hilarion

Metropolitan of Volokolamsk

Chairman

Department for External Church Relations

Moscow Patriarchate

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