



Metropolitan Hilarion's message of greetings to Patriarch Irinej of Serbia

Metropolitan Hilarion of Volokolamsk, head of the Moscow Patriarchate's department for external church relations, has sent the following message of greetings to His Holiness Patriarch Irinej on the occasion of the commemoration day of St Sava of Serbia.

Your Holiness,

Kindly accept my heartfelt greetings on the occasion of the great feast of the Serbian Orthodox Church – the commemoration day of St Sava, the first Archbishop of Serbia and the spiritual father of the Orthodox Serbian people.

The memory of the ascetic life of St Sava has helped the Serbs in all times to daringly bear before the world the witness to Holy Orthodoxy, both in hard times of the Ottoman domination and in the years of World War II, in the period of godless power and in the consequent tragic events of the last decades. Devotional ties with the greatest Serbian saint supports the spirit of today's confessors of the faith of the fathers who suffer today in Kosovo and Metohija sanctified by the works of St Arsenije Sremac and other glorious disciples of the founder of the Serbian Orthodox Church.

St Sava also symbolizes the deeply-rooted history of fraternal relations between the peoples nourished spiritually by the Russian and Serbian Orthodox Churches. The Russian Orthodox Church cherishes the memory of how the future spiritual leader of the Serbian people did ascetic endeavours in the monastic community of the St Panteleimon Monastery on Holy Mount Athos.

On this auspicious day, I wish Your Holiness joy in the Lord and beneficial replenishment of your spiritual and physical strength for many good years of the Primatial ministry.

With respectful love in the Lord,

Metropolitan Hilarion of Volokolamsk

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