Address by Metropolitan Hilarion of Volokolamsk on awarding a degree of Doctor Honoris Causa of Ss Cyril and Methodius Theological Institute of Post-Graduate Studies to Metropolitan Kallistos (Ware) of Diocleia

On 13 December 2014, Metropolitan Kallistos (Ware) of Diocleia was awarded Doctor Honoris Causa degree. The ceremony took place at the Main Hall of Ss Cyril and Methodius Theological Institute of Post-Graduate Studies.

Your Eminence, Your Graces,

Very Reverends and Reverends,

dear faculty members and students,

dear guests:

For Ss Cyril and Methodius Theological Institute of Postgraduate Studies, today is a special day. For the second time in the history of our educational institution we award doctor *honoris causa* degree. And it is a great joy and privilege for us that, with the blessing of Kirill, Patriarch of Moscow and all Russia, doctor of theology *honoris causa* degree is awarded to one of the most notable Orthodox hierarchs of our times, Metropolitan of Diocleia Kallistos.

His Eminence Metropolitan Kallistos was born in Great Britain in 1934, studied in the renowned Westminster school and graduated from Oxford with honours, specialising in classics and theology. Doctoral thesis Metropolitan Kallistos defended at Oxford was a research into the teaching of St. Marcus the Ascetic. At the very onset of his academic work, the Metropolitan chose to focus on patristic studies, and he has been faithful to this filed for many decades of his academic endeavours.

At the age of 24, the future Metropolitan Kallistos embraced Orthodox faith. He started his Orthodox

journey at Monastery of St. John the Theologian in Patmos, where he was tonsured in 1966.

Upon his return to Great Britain in 1966, hieromonk Kallistos was taken on to lecture on Eastern Christian studies at Oxford, becoming the successor to Nikolay Zernov, for whom the position had originally been established.

In 1982, hieromonk Kallistos was consecrated bishop of Diocleia, assistant bishop of Ecumenical Patriarchate's Archdiocese of Thyateira and Great Britain, and a parish priest of a Greek Orthodox parish in Oxford. In 2007, he became metropolitan.

During his years at Oxford, Metropolitan Kallistos equipped many scholars of Orthodox theology and patristic heritage, and his graduates represent Orthodox Church around the globe, in the East, as well as in the West, from New York to Moscow. Among his disciples are hierarchs of the Local Orthodox Churches, renowned theologians working in the fields of patristic studies and church histories, and members of other Christian denominations.

Metropolitan Kallistos as a lector possesses special charisma, evident for the hundreds and thousands of people he has lectured. Seasoned with good old British humour, his lectures, even when he speaks on the most complex theological issues, are easily understood even by any audience.

The Metropolitan invested many years of his life into academic supervision of postgraduate students, spending a lot of time on one-on-one sessions and reading dissertation drafts. Quite a few hundreds of academic papers that influenced the current development of the Orthodox theology were prepared and defended under his guidance.

The community of Metropolitan Kallistos students includes a few hundred people, some of whom know each other and all of whom respect their professor and mentor. Some of his graduates, including me, are present here today.

During the years of his ministry, the Metropolitan has participated in many important projects aimed at developing Orthodox scholarship and making Orthodox Christianity better known in the West.

His Eminence is the chairman of the group Friends of Orthodoxy on Iona (in Scotland) and of the Friends of Mount Athos. Besides, the Metropolitan chairs the Committee on Orthodox-Anglican dialogue and is a member of the Committee on dialogue between the Catholic Church and the Orthodox Church.

Quite a few people in the West, especially in English-speaking countries, learned of Orthodoxy from the books by Metropolitan Kallistos. His books, *The Orthodox Church* and *The Orthodox Way*, have

become international bestsellers, republished many times in English and translated into other languages as well. He authored many translations of the writings of the Church Fathers and liturgical books. Under his guidance and with his participation, the *Lenten Triodion* and *Festal Menaion* were translated and published, along with 4 volumes of *Philokalia*. Metropolitan Kallistos is the author of *Eustratios Argenti: A Study of the Greek Church under Turkish Rule* and over 200 articles on various topics pertaining to Orthodox theology and Eastern patristics. St. Vladimir's Theological Seminary in New York is presently working on a 6-volume collection of works by Metropolitan Kallistos.

The main focus of theological writings of Metropolitan Kallistos is the Orthodox Tradition in its full scope and diversity. He unfolds the riches of Tradition, first and foremost, in the writings of Church Fathers, such as Gregory of Nyssa, Marcus the Ascetic, Maximus the Confessor, Isaac the Syrian, Symeon the New Theologian, and Gregory Palamas.

The Metropolitan discusses Russian spiritual tradition as well. It was in Russia that the heritage of Byzantine hesychasm was revived in the ascetic life of such great saints as Sergius of Radonezh, Nil Sorsky, Seraphim of Sarov and Silouan the Athonite. Metropolitan Kallistos wrote a few papers on the heritage of St. Silouan, and his interest in the life of this saint originated not only from reading St. Silouan's writing but from a personal acquaintance with one of St. Silouan's closest disciples, Archimandrite Sophrony (Sakharov).

In his works, Metropolitan Kallistos often addresses the relationship between Orthodox Christianity and other denominations. His interest in this topic stems from the position he has in the Western Christian world and his own conversion from Anglicanism to Orthodoxy, as well as his academic experience within secular academia.

Your Eminence:

Through the years of your faithful service to the Orthodox Church and Orthodox theology you have earned a reputation of an outstanding theologian, hierarch and mentor.

God has generously endowed you with many gifts that you fully invested in the most important work of your life, the study and popularisation of the heritage of the great Church Fathers, such as Marcus the Ascetic, Maximus the Confessor, Symeon the New Theologian, Gregory Palamas and others. Your have immersed yourself in the study of these saints demonstrating the true indispensable value of their heritage and full riches of the Orthodox tradition to people of the present day.

Thanks to your effort and your books, many people have found and kept the precious pearl of Christian faith.

Your ministry in Great Britain has laid a firm foundation for expansion of the Orthodox faith and theology in that land, has proven how valuable is the dialogue of Christians of various denominations, and has strengthened brotherly ties between the Local Orthodox Churches.

Dear Right Reverend,

For me, as your student and, at present, as your co-worker in the field of patristic studies and interdenominational dialogue, it is a joy and a privilege to award you, with the blessing of His Holiness Patriarch Kirill of Moscow and all Russia and by the decision of the Academic Council of Theological Institute of Postgraduate Studies, the doctor of theology degree *honoris causa,* as a token of our acknowledgment of your outstanding work in academic scholarship and the Orthodox world.

Axios!

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