



St. Vladimir's Seminary in New York holds academic convocation for Metropolitan Hilarion of Volokolamsk awarded Doctor of Divinity Honoris Causa

November 9, 2014 – Metropolitan Hilarion of Volokolamsk, head of the Moscow Patriarchate's department for external church relations and rector of the Ss Cyril and Methodius Institute of Post-Graduate Studies, who is on a visit to the USA with a blessing of His Holiness Patriarch Kirill of Moscow and All Russia, attended the academic convocation at St. Vladimir's Seminary in New York.

The event began with Great Vespers at the seminary's chapel. Among the worshippers – professors and students of the seminary and invited guests – were the head of the Orthodox Church in America, His Beatitude Archbishop Tikhon of Washington, Metropolitan of All America and Canada; Metropolitan Hilarion of Volokolamsk; and Bishop John of Naro-Fominsk, administrator of the Patriarchal Parishes in the USA.

The service was followed by an academic convocation at the assembly hall of the library. It was opened by the head of the Orthodox Church in America, Metropolitan Tikhon. The rector of the seminary Archpriest John Behr, in his address, pointed to the importance of cooperation between Orthodox Church on the academic platform. He stressed a special importance of establishing cooperation between St. Vladimir's Seminary and the Ss Cyril and Methodius Institute founded at the initiative of His Holiness Patriarch Kirill and directed by Metropolitan Hilarion. In conclusion of his speech, he voiced the decision of St. Vladimir's Seminary Academic Council to award Metropolitan Hilarion the degree of Doctor of Divinity Honoris Causa. The diploma of the degree was presented to Metropolitan Hilarion by Metropolitan Tikhon.

The convocation lecture was presented by Metropolitan Hilarion on the theme “**Primacy and Synodality from an Orthodox Perspective**”. Beginning his address, he stressed the importance of cooperation between the leading academic institutions of the Russian Orthodox Church and the Orthodox Church in America, which he believes becomes especially important in the situation of growing political tension in the world.

On the same day Metropolitan Hilarion celebrated the memorial service at the grave of the great Russian composer Sergei Rachmaninov at the Kensico Cemetery in New York. Praying at the service were Bishop John, the rector and the chancellor of St. Vladimir's Seminary together with its professors and students. The singing was served by the St. Vladimir's Seminary's choir.

Rachmaninov was buried in Kensico near New York in 1943. Buried next to him are his wife Natalia and daughter Irina, by marriage Princess Irina Wolkonsky.

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