Metropolitan Hilarion of Volkolamsk: Reading of the Psalms for a Christian is a talk with God

On 27 July 2014, 7th Sunday after Pentecost, the commemoration day of the Holy Fathers of the Six Ecumenical Councils, Metropolitan Hilarion of Volokolamsk, chairman of the Moscow Patriarchate's Department for External Church Relations, rector of the Ss. Cyril and Methodius Theological Institute for Post-Graduate Studies, celebrated the Divine Liturgy at the Church of the "Joy to All the Afflicted" Icon of the Mother of God in Bolshaya Ordynka Street in Moscow. Concelebrating with him were Metropolitan Zinovy of Saransk and Mordovia, Archbishop Mikhail of Geneva and Western Europe (Russian Church Abroad), and clerics of the church.

During the Liturgy, Metropolitan Hilarion said a prayer for peace in Ukraine.

After the service, the DECR chairman greeted Metropolitan Zinovy and Archbishop Mikhail, who had arrived in Moscow to take part in a session of the Holy Synod of the Russian Orthodox Church and in the celebrations on the commemoration day of the Holy Prince Vladimir, Equal to the Apostles. After

greeting the hierarchs, Metropolitan Hilarion addressed the worshippers with a homily, saying in particular:

“Dear brothers and sisters, today’s Gospel reading told us how the Lord had healed two blind men, who had been sitting by the road, crying, “Thou son of David, have mercy on us” (Mt 9:27-31). We have heard this story many times and often spoke about the meaning of spiritual blindness and physical blindness, and how the Lord Jesus Christ opens spiritual and physical eyes of people.

“Therefore, today I would like to draw your attention to another aspect of the story – to the fact that the blind men, addressing Christ, called him son of David. From Christ’s genealogy in the Gospel according to Mathew and the Gospel according to Luke we know that He was of the lineage of David. The Gospel reminds us that the Messianic line goes back to David not only because our Lord Jesus Christ was of his lineage, but also because David was a king and a prophet and thus the prototype of the greatest King, Prophet and High-Priest, Christ.

“It is not fortuitous that we call King David a prophet… The Lord gave him a gift of prophecy which became fully apparent in the book that he had written – the Psalter. The Psalter which consists mainly of the writing of king and prophet David, is a book that we use every day, during the Divine Services and for our prayers at home. It contains prayers for every occasion: it can be read in sorrow and despair, in fear, calamities, with tears of repentance and in joy after receiving consolation, in gratitude and for offering pure praise to the Creator.

“The reading of the Psalms for a Christian is a talk with God, it is edification of the soul. I would like us to read the Psalter every day: if not one cathisma a day, then at least one psalm a day, looking into every word. The reading of the Psalter gives great comfort and helps us in our earthly life and on our way to salvation.”

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