On the Day of Lord's Entry into Jerusalem, Metropolitan Hilarion celebrates Divine Liturgy in Spanish capital



April 12, 2014 – With the blessing of Holiness Patriarch Kirill of Moscow and All Russia, Metropolitan Hilarion of Volokolamsk, head of the Moscow Patriarchate's department for external church relations, arrived in Spain. He was met by Russian Ambassador Yu. Korchagin and Rev. Andrey Kordochkin, rector of the church of St. Mary Magdalene in Madrid.

During his visit, Metropolitan Hilarion will celebrate at the Moscow Patriarchate's churches in Madrid and Barcelona, participate in the presentation of a Spanish version of Patriarch Kirill's book "Freedom and Responsibility: in a Search for Harmony" and meet with Cardinal Antonio Maria Rouco Varela, Archbishop of Madrid, and Cardinal Luis Martinez Sistach, Archbishop of Barcelona.

Metropolitan Hilarion is accompanied by Mr. L. Sevastyanov, executive director of the St. Gregory the Theologian Charity, Hieromonk Stephan (Igumnov), DECR secretary for inter-Christian relations, Hierodeacon Nikolay (Ono), student of the Ss Cyril and Methodius Institute of Post-Graduate Studies,

and Mr. Migel Palacio, DECR secretariat for near abroad.

On April 13, 2014, the Day of the Lord's Entry into Jerusalem, Metropolitan Hilarion celebrated the Divine Liturgy at the Russian Orthodox church of St. Mary Magdalene in Madrid. Among numerous worshippers were Russian Ambassador Yu. Korchagin and his wife.

After the liturgy Metropolitan Hilarion addressed the congregation, speaking first on the emergence of the parish, which for a long time had had to assemble for divine services in a garage. He commended the efforts of Father Andrey and many people who had worked to build that magnificent church in the Spanish capital to become the home for the multinational community of the Russian Orthodox Church, uniting Russians, Ukrainians, Byelorussians, Spaniards and people of many other ethnic backgrounds.

Speaking on the Gospel Reading of the day with a stress on the Phil. 4:4, "Rejoice in the Lord always", Metropolitan Hilarion set off the transitory temporal joy over our earthly successes and achievements against the spiritual joy in the Holy Spirit, "which is always with us, for its source is the Lord Himself".

This joyful day, he said, is also sorrowful for us because it precedes the Passion Week, when we will remember the terrible events in the earthly life of the Lord. But, "as the Lord said, it will be sorrow that will turn into joy because we know that all those events were followed by the Resurrection of Christ. And in a week's time we will meet the Risen Lord with that inherent spiritual joy that nobody will ever be able to take away from us".

Every worshipper present in the church received an icon of Our Lady the Joy to All the Afflicted as a benediction of Metropolitan Hilarion.

DECR Communication Service

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