



## **DECR chairman continues his pilgrimage to Mount Athos**

On 14 April 2013, Metropolitan Hilarion of Volokolamsk, chairman of the Moscow Patriarchate's Department for External Church Relations, currently leading the group of pilgrims visiting the Holy Mount Athos with the blessing of His Holiness Patriarch Kirill of Moscow and All Russia, visited the Iveron Monastery.

Metropolitan Hilarion celebrated an Akathistos in the Greek language before the miraculous Iveron icon of the Mother of God. His Eminence and his suite venerated relics of many saints and had a talk with hegumen, archimandrite Nathanail, and the brethren.

That same day the pilgrims visited the cells of St. Nicodemus and St. Mylopotamos and proceeded to the Koutloumousiou Monastery, where they prayed at Lenten Grand Compline and had talks with the brethren. There are several Russian monks among them.

In the evening the pilgrims arrived at the Monastery of Vatopedi. They venerated the Cincture of the Mother of God, her miraculous icons, precious heads of Ss Gregory the Theologian and John Chrysostom, and other relics. After the repast, Metropolitan Hilarion met with the brethren. He told them about the revival of church life in Russia, Ukraine, Belarus and other countries in the canonical responsibility of the Moscow Patriarchate during the last twenty-five years and about monasticism in the Russian Orthodox Church. The talk lasted one hour and a half; Metropolitan Hilarion answered many questions.