Metropolitan Hilarion of Volokolamsk meets with Pope Francis of Rome



On 20 March 2013, Pope Francis of Rome met with Metropolitan Hilarion of Volokolamsk, chairman of the Moscow Patriarchate's Department for External Church Relations (DECR). The meeting took place at the premises of Vatican Secretariat of State.

At the beginning of the meeting, the DECR chairman conveyed to Pope Francis warm greetings and gratitude for prayers from His Holiness Patriarch Kirill of Moscow and All Russia and noted that the Primate of the Russian Orthodox Church had closely followed the process of election and enthronement. Metropolitan Hilarion presented the Pope with Patriarch Kirill's book "Freedom and Responsibility" in the Spanish language. Pope Francis conveyed his sincere best wishes to the Primate of the Russian Orthodox Church.

Metropolitan Hilarion told Pope Francis about life and ministry of the Russian Orthodox Church and expressed his hope that good strides in the development of relations between the Russian Orthodox

Church and the Roman Catholic Church made during the pontificate of Benedict XVI would be ensured. The DECR chairman added that the Moscow Patriarchate attached great importance to the development of relations with the Catholic Church, particularly in the field of social ministry, aid to the poor and the destitute, and protection of the persecuted.

Metropolitan Hilarion also told the Pope about the problems still existing between the two Churches and expressed his hope for finding ways to their solution during the new pontificate.

In conclusion of the meeting, the DECR chairman handed a gift from Patriarch Kirill, an icon of the Mother of God, called 'Look Down with Favour on My Lowliness', to Pope Francis, noting that "the first steps of Your Holiness after the election were marked by lowliness and humility." Pope Francis replied that he lacked humility and asked for prayers to the Lord to grant it to him.

The talk was held in the Russian and Spanish languages and was translated by Miguel Palacio, a DECR staff member.

Source: https://mospat.ru/en/news/52916/