**THE RUSSIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH**
Department for External Church Relations

# His Holiness Patriarch Kirill expresses condolences over demise of Patriarch of Antiochian Orthodox Church

**To: The Holy Synod of the Orthodox Church of Antioch**

Your Eminences,

Fellow-Archpastors Beloved in the Lord:

I have been grieved to learn about the demise of the long-standing Primate of the Most Holy Church of Antioch, His Beatitude Patriarch Ignatius IV of Great Antioch and All the East.

On behalf of the hierarchs, clergy, monastics and laity of the Russian Orthodox Church and on my own behalf I would like to express profound condolences over the bereavement of the Orthodox Church of Antioch.

Blissfully departed Patriarch Ignatios has been at the helm of the Most Holy Church of Antioch in a period of severe trials that have befallen to her lot. His biblical wisdom and profound Christian humbleness have made him one of the outstanding religious leaders of today. He worked much for peace and wellbeing in the old land of the East. Working for the spiritual nourishment of his flock, he was a model of ardent worker in the field of Christ and tireless devotee who gained the church people’s love and respect not only in Antioch but also far beyond it.

We are mourning together with you over the demise of His Beatitude Patriarch Ignatius, who was a friend of the Russian Orthodox Church for many years, following the age-old tradition of fraternal cooperation between the ancient Antioch and Holy Russia.

As one who has been connected with the deceased by long-standing bonds of personal friendship, I remember with heartfelt warmth our recent talks in Syria and Lebanon. I ardently pray for the repose of the soul of the Blissfully Departed Patriarch Ignatius *in the bright place of light, in the place of rest whence all pain, sorrow and sighing have fled away* and for his inclusion in the assembly of the elected of Christ.

May His Beatitude Patriarch Ignatius of eternal memory be an intercessor for his people and for all the Orthodox Christians at the Throne of God, dwelling in the mansions of the righteous.

Eternal and blessed memory to him!

+ KIRILL

PATRIARCH OF MOSCOW AND ALL RUSSIA

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