Metropolitan Hilarion of Volokolamsk greets Moscow State University faculty and students on the occasion of the Day of Knowledge

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On September 1, 2012, Metropolitan Hilarion of Volokolamsk, in his capacity of rector of the Sts Cyril and Methodius Post-Graduate School, took part in the solemn assembly on the occasion of the Freshman Day-2012 held at the Lomonosov State University, Moscow.

Metropolitan Hilarion greeted the assembly on behalf of His Holiness Patriarch Kirill and addressing the faculty and students, said in particular,

‘I would like to greet you all, especially the first-year students of Moscow State University, on the occasion of the new academic year. You have just crossed the threshold which separates youth from adulthood; by entering the university you have entered adulthood. What does it mean for each of you? Here you will acquire knowledge in various fields and first of all in the field you have chosen. However, to become a full-fledged person really useful to other people and society, it is not sufficient to merely assimilate a certain sum of knowledge. What is necessary is to learn to use it and to understand what we receive this knowledge for. That is why goal-setting is so important for a student, so that he or she could put the received knowledge in a savings box to give out it later to people, to give out knowledge, skills and, most importantly, to give out the good.

‘The future of our homeland belongs to you. You will determine what our country will be in 20, 30, 40 and more years. And not only your own future but the future of our country will depend on your academic performance and on the quality of your university years. So, do not waste time. Use these years to discover as much as possible, to learn as much as possible and, most importantly, to formulate for yourselves the goal of your life.

‘Today many people, including university graduates have achieved great successes but do not know what they live for. Their life is devoid of meaning and it means there is no happiness in it. Material success and worldly welfare cannot replace the inner resource without which life becomes boring and meaningless. This inner resource is given to man by religion. Each person comes to God by his or her road. God is one for all, but we see Him differently. For many people, regrettably sometimes even for those who claim to be believers, God remains a certain abstraction. These people have a certain idea of God but do not feel any living relation with God. The word ‘religion’ proper means ‘relation’ or ‘restoration of relation’, and the living relation between man and God may be the same as the relation between child and mother, husband and wife, between two close people. Because God is not an abstraction; God is living and real. He is the One Who hears our prayers and responds to them. God is the One Who helps us in our life journey, Who guides us through life, like a mother takes her child to a kindergarten or school, like professors guide their students to more and more new knowledge.

‘Each of you is led by God along your own road. None finds this road easy, but the most important thing is for you to understand the goal and meaning of your life. If your life is meaningful, the rest will take care of itself. If it has a meaning you will not fall into any pernicious dependence. You will always understand what you study for and what you live for.

‘I wish you all God’s help and success. I wish all the freshmen successful graduation, happy life and life beneficial for others. May the Lord bless you!’

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