



Metropolitan Hilarion of Volokolamsk presents Estonian version of Patriarch Kirill's book 'A Pastor's Word'

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On April 24, 2012, a presentation of the Estonian version of the book by His Holiness Patriarch Kirill of Moscow and All Russia 'A Pastor's Word' took place at the Moscow Patriarchate's department for external church relations. It was attended among others by Metropolitan Hilarion, DECR chairman, Bishop Lazar of Narva and Prichudye, Estonian Ambassador to Russia Simmu Tiik, Ms Helene Tedre, counsellor for culture at the Estonian Embassy in Moscow, Mr S. Mjannik, member of the Synod of the Estonian Orthodox Church, Archpriest Vladimir Solovyev, editor-in-chief of the Moscow Patriarchate Publishers, Hegumen Philaret Bulekov, a DECR vice-chairman, Archpriest Igor Yakimchuk, DECR secretary for inter-Orthodox relations, Hegumen Mitrofan Shkurin, acting vice-chairman of the Synodal Department for Religious Education and Catechism, Mr A. Sivankov, president of the InvestPravo company group, Mr. A. Konovalov, InvestPravo director general, Mr L. Sevastyanov, executive director of the St. Gregory the Theologian Charity, Mr V. Ilyashevich, secretary of the Russia's Writers' Union board, and writer M. W. Parker, Great Britain. There were also Russian and foreign reporters.

As Metropolitan Hilarion remarked, several genres intertwine in the book 'A Pastor's Word' – theology, history, philosophy, psychology, social journalism and many other things. 'As compared to the TV talks, the book has been enriched with numerous additional topics, unexpected interpretations of well-known biblical stories, the author's reflections on eternal questions arising before man again and again'.

In the book 'A Pastor's Word', the events of the life of the Lord Jesus Christ on earth, related in the four Gospels, are lined chronologically, which helps the reader to see the well-known Gospels' stories in a new and sometimes unusual perspective. 'For the modern man, this work is a kind of a Bible guide-book', the archpastor said.

In his address to the readers of the Estonian version, His Holiness Patriarch Kirill says, 'Our Church carries out her service not only in Russia and not only among Russian people. The canonical responsibility of the Moscow Patriarchate extends today to many independent states with their own language, national culture and customs. Among them is certainly Estonia, a country with old European traditions, in which people belonging to different Christian confessions have lived together for centuries'.

Bishop Lazar, in his turn, underscored the ability of the Primate of the Russian Orthodox Church to communicate with people of different walks of life, saying, 'As a pioneer in the task of preaching on television and talking to millions-strong audience in the 90s, which included both high intellectuals and

people of labour, His Holiness raised high the authority of the Church's word in the country'.

According to statistics referred to by Bishop Lazar, people in Estonia are mostly indifferent to any religious views. In this connection, he expressed the hope that 'this remarkable book will make a weighty contribution to the propagation of Orthodoxy among the Estonian population and will help people to discover the depth and beauty of Christianity'.

Estonia's Ambassador Simmu Tiik reminded the audience that the Russian Orthodox Church and Estonia are tied together by such holy places as the Pskov Monastery of the Caves and the Piukhtitsy Convent. Estonia is intimately bound up with the life and ministry of the late Patriarch Alexy II. 'For many centuries, Orthodoxy has been a visible part of the cultural and social life in Estonia. The publication of a book reflecting the development of the contemporary Orthodox thought of the Russian Church in the Estonian language is a good and worthy cause', the head of the Estonian diplomatic representation said. He presented Metropolitan Hilarion with a copy of the book 'Orthodox Churches, Monasteries and Chapels in Estonia'.

Archpriest Vladimir Solovyev expressed the hope that the book presented would become popular among the wide circles of the Estonian society. "The book 'A Pastor's Word' is of special importance since it is a book for all people", he said.

In his remarks, Mr. A. Sivankov thanked for the possibility for him to take part in the educational project for publishing the book. 'Television and the Internet have prevailed in society today. However, we should not belittle the role of the printed word in the cause of people's spiritual education. The impact that an intelligent book makes on people's awareness is incomparable', the project sponsor said.

In consideration of the support given to the Estonian Orthodox Church, Bishop Lazar presented Mr. Sivankov and Mr. Konovalov as well as Ms. Yu. Polyakova, director of the Russian Cultural Center in Tallinn, icons of the Assembly of Estonian Saints.

In conclusion, Metropolitan Hilarion answered questions from journalists.

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