



Metropolitan Hilarion: Power that is not based on love will never bring good fruits

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On 29 February 2012, the Wednesday of the first Lenten week, Metropolitan Hilarion of Volokolamsk, chairman of the Moscow Patriarchate's Department for External Church Relations, celebrated Grand Compline at the Church of the "Joy to All the Afflicted" Icon of the Mother of God. After the Penitential Canon of St. Andrew of Crete, Metropolitan Hilarion addressed the congregation with a homily, which he began with quoting the prayer of St. Ephraim the Syrian, 'O Lord and Master of my life! Take from me the spirit of sloth, despair, lust of power, and idle talk!'

"We have already talked about the sins of sloth and despair, and today I would like to say some words about lust of power.

"Why do we pray to God to deliver us from this sin? We do it because many other human sins are rooted in it.

"Why the lust of power is so dangerous? Power as such is not dangerous, but it is dangerous to lust for it. The notion of power is inseparably linked to the notion of responsibility. The more power and authority a man has, the more responsibility he bears. A man vested with power can use for the benefit of people only if he does not spare his energy and his life for the good of people.

"Wise people often declined power, as St. Sergius of Radonezh did when offered the metropolitan's see. He used his authority that he enjoined with the brethren for their good caring for them. He was a very responsible person in his ministry, endowed with many gifts from God. Therefore, the monastery that he established has been a model for Orthodox monasticism and for people's community as a whole.

"The notion of power is inseparably linked to the notion of love. Power that is not based on love will never bring good fruits.

"During Lent, we shall beseech God with the words from the prayer of St. Ephraim the Syrian: 'O Lord and Master of my life! Take from me the spirit of sloth, despair, lust of power, and idle talk!'