



Report of His Holiness Patriarch Kirill at the Moscow Diocesan Assembly sums up his ministry in 2011

An annual meeting of the Moscow Diocesan Assembly chaired by His Holiness Patriarch Kirill of Moscow and All Russia was held in the Hall of Church Councils of the Cathedral of Christ the Saviour on December 23, 2011.

The Primate of the Russian Orthodox Church presented a report; one part contained a review of the activities of Patriarch as the ruling bishop of Moscow in 2011.

The Blessed Bishops' Council, which took place in Moscow on February 2-4, favoured a proposal to reorganize the Conference of the Heads of Synodal departments into the Supreme Church Council and place it under the Patriarch and the Holy Synod. The Council held its meetings on April 14, June 23, August 23, and December 1.

The Bishops' Council has set certain tasks; parishes and diocesan commissions have achieved targets in compliance with the Council's decisions.

His Holiness convened five sessions of the Holy Synod. Its sixth session, the last in this year, will take place on December 27-28. The Synod adopted a number of documents pertaining to parish life. According to His Holiness, they contain concrete proposals and describe the forms of various kinds of activity in parishes, deaneries, dioceses, and the Church as whole; all priests and staff should know these instructions and make use of them.

The first plenary session of the Inter-Council Presence, which was established in 2010, took place at the Cathedral of Christ the Saviour on January 28-29. Three sessions were held; the fourth will take place on December 26.

The Primate of the Russian Church had several meetings with the Russian President Dmitry Medvedev, the Prime Minister Vladimir Putin and members of the Russian Government; with Moscow Mayor Sergei Sobyenin, Presidential Envoys in Federal districts, the heads of foreign states and governments, and with the ambassadors.

Twenty-nine new dioceses were established, including twenty-three in Russia. Several more dioceses will be set up at the forthcoming session of the Holy Synod. Metropolias were established to coordinate the work of the dioceses located in the territory of the same subject of the Russian Federation.

His Holiness Patriarch Kirill paid a friendly visit to the Orthodox Church of Antioch on November 12-15 by tradition of visiting the heads of the Local Orthodox Churches in accordance with their place in diptychs. His Holiness concelebrated with His beatitude Patriarch Ignatius of Antioch, met with state leaders of Syria and Lebanon, leaders of the major religious communities, and compatriots. "It was important to support to our brothers at hard times, to express concern of the Russian Church for the destiny of Christians in the Middle East and share this concern with the state leaders," His Holiness underscored.

The Primate of the Russian Orthodox Church made twenty-one archpastoral visits to nineteen dioceses in Russia, Ukraine and Moldova. By tradition, he visited the stavropegic monasteries in Moscow and elsewhere.

His Holiness celebrated 201 divine services, officiated at thirty episcopal consecrations and nine ordinations into priesthood, and consecrated twelve new churches.

The Primate of the Russian Church named the most important events in the life of the Church, among them the veneration of the Sash of the Mother of God by over three million people, including one million people in Moscow. His Holiness called the clergy "to be worthy of the faith of our people."

He noted in particular the consecration of the construction site of a new hostel of the Moscow Theological Academy on July 18, the commemoration day of St. Sergius, Hegumen of Radonezh.

His Holiness attended meetings of some Boards of Trustees.

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