



## **Seventh theological talks between Russian Orthodox Church and German Bishops' Conference begin at the DECR**

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On December 6, 2011, the 7<sup>th</sup> theological talks between the Russian Orthodox Church and the German Bishops' Conference (Roman Catholic Church) on Christian Understanding of Human Rights began at the Moscow Patriarchate's Department for External Church Relations.

Representing the Russian Orthodox Church are Archbishop Feofan of Berlin and Germany (co-chairman), Archbishop Filipp of Poltava and Mirgorod, Archbishop Seraphim of Bobruisk and Bykhov, Rev. Dimitry Sizonenko, DECR secretary for inter-Christian relations, and DECR staff members Rev. Alexander Vasiutin and Rev. Aleksiy Dikarev.

Participating in the talks on behalf of the German Bishops' Conference are Dr. Gerhard Ludwig Müller, Bishop of Regensburg (co-chairman), Dr. Gerhard Feige, Bishop of Magdeburg, Dr. Nikolaus Schwerdtfeger, Auxiliary Bishop in Hildesheim, Dr. Johannes Oeldemann, professors Dr. Albert-Peter Rethmann, Dr. Josef Freitag, Dr. Eberhard Schockenhoff, and Dr. Heinz-Gerhard Justenhoven.

Hegumen Philaret (Bulekov), DECR vice-chairman, Bishop of Regensburg Dr. Gerhard Ludwig Müller, and Archbishop Feofan of Berlin and Germany welcomed the participants.

Archbishop Seraphim of Bobruisk and Bykhov made a report on Human Rights in the Tradition of the Russian Orthodox Church; a lively discussion followed by.

Bishop Dr. Nikolaus Schwerdtfeger spoke on Vatican II's position on Human Dignity. "Dignitatis humanae" Declaration and Its Historical Context.

The Conference will carry on its work on December 7 and 8. Communiqué will be issued on the results of the theological talks.

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The Moscow Patriarchate initiated theological talks between the Russian Orthodox Church and the

German Bishops' Conference in 1986. The first were held in Moscow that same year and were continued in Munich (1988), Altötting (1992), St. Ottilien (1996), Minsk (1998), the Benedictine Abbey of Weltenburg, Bavaria (2009).

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