



Patriarch Kirill celebrates Divine Liturgy at the church of Our Lady the Joy to All the Afflicted-in-Bolshaya Ordynka

On November 6, 2011, the Day of the Icon of Our Lady the Joy to All the Afflicted, His Holiness Patriarch Kirill of Moscow and All Russia celebrated the Divine Liturgy at the church of Our Lady the Joy to All the Afflicted-in-Bolshaya Ordynka in Moscow.

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During the liturgy Patriarch Kirill led the bishops in consecrating Archimandrite Guriy (Fedorov) as Bishop Aresenyev and Dalnegorsk.

During the liturgy His Holiness said a prayer for the health of His Beatitude Vladimir, Metropolitan of Kiev and All Ukraine, who is seriously ill.

After the liturgy Patriarch Kirill said a prayer of praise at the miracle-working Icon of Our Lady the Joy to All the Afflicted, the main shrine of the church.

In greeting His Holiness, Metropolitan Hilarion of Volokolamsk said in particular, 'Your Holiness has headed the Russian Orthodox Church for almost three years now and many things you have done in this time have been done for the first time. For the first time the Patriarch visited the remotest parts in Russia and neighbouring countries. For the first time an episcopal consecration has been performed in this church. This church has seen many bishops beginning from St. Philaret of Moscow, who consecrated it, and St. Constantine, who served in it, and others, but no one has ever conducted an episcopal consecration in it'.

On behalf of the clergy and laity of the church Metropolitan Hilarion presented Patriarch Kirill with a copy of the old icon of St. Alexis, the Metropolitan of Moscow, and patriarchal vestments made after the fashion depicted in the icon.

After the service, the Primate of the Russian Church addressed the congregation, saying in particular,

'When we come to this church with our afflictions, when we kneel before the icon of Our Lady the Joy to All the Afflicted and ask the Heavenly Queen to help us in our afflictions, we should ask ourselves: Have

we ourselves always helped the afflicted? If we heartlessly passed by those who asked for our help, why then the Mother of God should help us? Do we weep before an icon only because a life circumstance has anguished our own heart? Is it sufficient? No, it is not.

An Orthodox parish, an Orthodox community... should be a place of mercy, charity, real love, perhaps first of all for the needy parishioners, those who may have nothing to eat after this Divine Liturgy, those who will freeze because of bad clothes, those who live heaven knows how. Very often those who come to church are lonely and seek help here. And the Lord can give them this help only through us, through our hands. And then, by our charitable response to the suffering of others we will have an opportunity to be heard by God and His Most Holy Mother and be given according to our prayer.

This is what today's celebration devoted to the Icon of Our Lady the Joy to All the Afflicted teaches us... And when we embark on this path of good works, may the Lord give us the joy to feel His real presence in our life. And may this feeling strengthen our faith and determination to do good for the glory of His holy name'.

Patriarchal Press Service/DECR Communication Service

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