Metropolitan Hilarion visits Community of St. Egidio

On September 28, 2011, in the course of his working visit to Italy, Metropolitan Hilarion, head of the Moscow Patriarchate's department for external church relations, visited the Community of St. Egidio, an international charitable and peacemaking organization.

The leaders of the Community of St. Egidio gave a festive dinner in honour of Metropolitan Hilarion and the delegation of the Russian Orthodox Church who accompanied him. In the beginning of the meeting, the guests were warmly welcomed by Bishop Vincenzo Paglia of Terni-Narni-Amelia, spiritual director of the Community, and Prof. Adriano Roccucci, general secretary of the Community.

In the talk that followed it was noted that the Community of St. Egidio and the Russian Orthodox Church maintained fruitful cooperation for many years. Special attention was given to the importance of joint initiatives in protecting and preserving Europe's Christian heritage and in opposing the manifestations of Christianophobia in various countries of the world.

Bishop Vincenzo Paglia underscored the importance of the participation of Russian Orthodox church delegations in international interreligious meeting organized annually by the Community of St. Egidio.

An exchange of opinions took place concerning possible forms of developing relations between the Russian Orthodox Church and the Italian Bishops' Conference, individual Catholic dioceses in Italy and the Community of St. Egidio. In this connection, the participants in the meeting considered possible joint projects in the area of culture and education.

In conclusion of the meeting, Metropolitan Hilarion presented Bishop Vincenzo Paglia with a copy of the commemorative album published on the occasion of the 65th anniversary of the Department for External Church Relations.

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