



Metropolitan Hilarion: We must always remember of our responsibility as Christians

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On 4 September 2011, commemoration day of the Synaxis of Moscow Saints, Metropolitan Hilarion of Volokolamsk, chairman of the Moscow Patriarchate's Department for External Church Relations (DECR), celebrated Divine Liturgy at the Church of 'Joy to All the Afflicted' icon of the Mother of God, Bolshaya Ordynka street, Moscow. Concelebrating were archimandrite Kirill (Govorun), first deputy chairman of the Education Committee of the Russian Orthodox Church; hegumen Philaret (Bulekov), DECR deputy chairman; ordained DECR staff members, and clerics of the church.

After the Liturgy, Metropolitan Hilarion delivered a homily:

'Dear brothers and sisters!

'We have heard a reading from the Gospel today about the rich young man who asked the Lord what good deed he must do to have eternal life. The Lord told him to keep the Old Testament commandments. The young man said: "I have kept all these; what do I still lack? Jesus said to him: "If you wish to be perfect, go, sell your possessions, and give the money to the poor, and will have treasure in heaven; then come, follow me. When the young man heard this word, he went away grieving, for he had many possessions (Mt 19:20-22).

'Thus the Gospel reminds us that God and His commandments should be present in human life first and foremost. How many of us can say, as the young man did, "I have kept the commandments?" How many of us live according to God's law, test their life on it, and love God and their neighbour?

"It is very important to remember these commandments and to teach God's law to our children, and they will be always with the Lord and go along the way to the Heavenly Kingdom! This will help them not to succumb to temptation of modern times...

'Today we have prayed for children who have begun school-year. We prayed to the Lord to enlighten them with the light of His mind and to lead them so that they do not turn to evil ways and remain in the bosom of the Church.

‘We should also pray for ourselves, since we, like children, need God’s grace to help us keep His commandments. Often enough we do not respond to God’s call being preoccupied with earthly things concerns.

‘The Lord does not call us to give all our possessions to the poor and follow Him, as this is the way for perfect men. The Lord said to the rich young man, “If you wish to be perfect...”

‘The Lord does not call us to the radical denial of everything, but calls us to remember of people around us and to do good to them, to share with them, and to help them. The Lord wishes us to remember of our responsibility as Christians every day and every hour of our life.

‘Let us beseech the Lord to grant us strength to be the true and good Christians and to keep His commandments. He helps us in doing this, if we wish it. Let pray to God for our children to make them listen to reason, to open their inner eyes, to help them in studies, and delight in the law of the Lord day and night. This is the greatest thing, as the Lord said: “Strive first to the Kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well” (Mt 6:33). Let us pray for ourselves and for our children to strive first to the Kingdom of God, and all these things will be given to us. Amen!’