



Senior Russian and English bishops launch Patriarch Kirill of Moscow's first book in English

Metropolitan Hilarion of Volokolamsk and Bishop Richard Chartres of London joined forces at the London Book Fair today to launch the first-ever book in English of His Holiness is HikPatriarch Kirill of Moscow and All Russia. Entitled 'Freedom and Responsibility, a Search for Harmony – Human Rights and Personal Dignity', it is also a first joint venture between the English religious publishing house Darton, Longman and Todd and the Publishing House of the Moscow Patriarchate. The translator is Michael Lomax, a native English deacon of the Russian church in Belgium, whose wife, Irina Gorbunova, a leading Russian iconographer, provided the icon on the front of the book. The foreword is by Dr Chartres.

Welcoming guests to the event, Metropolitan Hilarion, who heads the Moscow Patriarchate's Department for External Church Affairs expressed the Patriarch's and his own delight at this publication, which clearly articulates the mind of the Russian church on the key issues of the place of religion in organized social life, and of the religious and moral values which are essential to the maintaining of civilized society. The current global debate on these issues is one which the Russian Orthodox Church feels compelled and entitled to join. Having had first-hand experience of the disastrous consequences of the curtailment of religious expression in society, the Patriarch is fearful of is fearful of this situation

being repeated in Western Europe.

Metropolitan Hilarion extended a special greeting to Dr Richard Chartres, the Anglican Bishop of London, who is a longstanding personal friend of the Patriarch of Moscow. The Church of England, together with the other mainline churches in Great Britain, is the inheritor of a particularly rich Christian tradition, in a society in which religion has historically played a defining role. For them, as for the Moscow Patriarchate in Russia, the task of guarding and guiding the religious experience of a people within its own cultural framework is a formidable charge, calling for enormous courage and integrity.

He praised Brendan Walsh, editorial director of Darton, Longman and Todd for the excellent cooperation with the Moscow Patriarchate Publishing House. He mentioned the long tradition of quality religious publishing in England, and DLT's own role in it. He reminded visitors that DLT was not new to Orthodoxy: it had been instrumental in publishing the works of Metropolitan Anthony (Bloom) of Sourozh back in the 1970s, and more recently his own book, 'The Mystery of Faith'. He commended the DLT for the quality of its work and thanked Mr Walsh's team for its patience and at times very Christian charity in the uncharted territory of Anglo-Russian cooperation.

Metropolitan Hilarion noted the large presence of the Russian publishing community at the London Book Fair, and encouraged it in its task of making Russian science and culture better known to the wider world.

Finally, he passed the Patriarch's blessing to Dr Chartres, to everyone who had worked on the book, and to the Russian participants in the London Book Fair.

In reply, Dr Richard Chartres, who as Anglican Bishop of London is the third most senior bishop in the Church of England, with a close relationship to the British Parliament and the monarchy, expressed his admiration for Metropolitan Kirill, as a man of courage and clear-sightedness, who has played a key role in bringing the Russian church into its front-line position in Russian society and into the wider debate on the Christian role in contemporary society. He recommended the book as one of the best introductions to the contemporary Russian religious mind, and hoped that there would be more such publications in English to follow.

Other distinguished guests at the launch ceremony, which was followed by a small banquet, were:

- the Ambassador of the Russian Federation Alexander Yakovenko

- Archbishop Elisey of Sourozh (the residing Russian Orthodox Church bishop in London, with responsibility for Great Britain and Ireland).

- Fr Vladimir Silovyev, Editor-in-chief of the Publishing House of the Moscow Patriarchate

- Brendan Walsh, Editorial Director of Darton, Longman and Todd

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