



Rachmanninov's All-Night Vigil performed at church of Our Lady the Joy to All the Afflicted in Bolshaya Ordynka

[gallery]

On April 2, 2011, Metropolitan Hilarion of Volokolamsk, head of the Moscow Patriarchate's department for external church relations, officiated at All-Night Vigil at the church of Our Lady the Joy to All the Afflicted in Bolshaya Ordynka, Moscow.

During the service, the Moscow Synodal Choir conducted by Russia's Honoured Artist A. Puzakov performed Rachmaninov's *All-Night Vigil*.

After the service, His Eminence Hilarion addressed the congregation. In his homily, he said in particular:

"Today, according to the tradition which has been observed in our church for many decades, the choir sang the All-Night Vigil by Sergey Rachmaninov. This tradition existed in this church even in the time when the faith was persecuted and when this composition was not performed even in concert halls.

"Once a year, on the day of Rachmaninov's death or the day nearest to it, this composition was performed and many people came here to hear the forbidden art. Rachmaninov composed his All-Night Vigil first of all as a work for a concert hall. It is very long and complicated and requires great efforts on the part of singers. For this reason it is seldom performed in a church. But those who are well familiar with this composition can feel in its sounds not only a perfect musical form but also a profound spiritual depth. Our great composer was inspired by the spirit of Orthodox liturgy and composed a music which does not go out of date and resounds in various countries, invariably attracting the attention of listeners. And every time when his All-Night Vigil is sung in our church we are amazed at the magnificence of this music based on the everyday, Greek and other old chants which Rachmaninov used and harmonized, giving them a very special form and very special sounding".

Metropolitan Hilarion also told the congregation about the trip to Serbia he had made with the blessing of Patriarch Kirill and on an invitation of Patriarch Irinej of Serbia. "I have come here straight from the airport to celebrate the All-Night vigil on the eve of the commemoration day of St. John Climacus", he said, adding, "Tomorrow we will pray to this great saint asking him to help us on our spiritual ascent in

which the Holy Church guides us in these Lenten days”.

DECR Communication Service

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