



Metropolitan Hilarion celebrates Divine Liturgy in Fribourg

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On 27 March 2011, the Sunday of the Adoration of the Cross, Metropolitan Hilarion of Volokolamsk, chairman of the Moscow Patriarchate's Department for External Church Relations (DECR), celebrated the Divine Liturgy in Fribourg, Switzerland. The service took place at the parish of the Romanian Orthodox Church, in a chapel provided by the Albertinum Dominican community.

Metropolitan Philaret of Minsk and Slutsk, Patriarchal Exarch of All Belarus, and Archbishop Ionafan of Tulchin and Bratslav prayed in the sanctuary. Concelebrating with Metropolitan Hilarion were Rev. Ioan Janculescu, rector of the Fribourg community of the Romanian Orthodox Church; hieromonk Gabriel (Bunge) and deacon Augustin Sokolowski of the Korsun diocese; and hierodeacon Ioann (Kopeikin), assistant to the DECR chairman.

Rev. Guido Vergauwen, rector of the University of Fribourg; professor Barbara Hallensleben of the Faculty of Theology; students from the Russian Orthodox Church studying in Fribourg; and representatives of the Romanian diaspora attended the divine service.

After the liturgy, the DECR chairman cordially greeted Metropolitan Philaret, who has arrived in Switzerland to take part in the ceremony of awarding Metropolitan Hilarion the title of titular professor of the University of Fribourg. Metropolitan Hilarion acknowledged an invaluable contribution made by the head of the Byelorussian Exarchate to the development of theological science and religious education in the Russian Orthodox Church.

Metropolitan Hilarion warmly thanked Archbishop Ionafan, Rev. Guido Vergauwen and Prof. Barbara Hallensleben for attending the divine service.

That same day in the evening, the participants attended a concert of Orthodox music given in the church at Collège St-Michel in Fribourg. The choir sang pieces of Old Russian (Znamenny) and Greek chants, works by Russian composers Dmitry Bortniansky and Sergei Rachmaninov, and "The Song of Ascents" symphony composed by Metropolitan Hilarion.