



## New vice-chairman of the Department for External Church Relations

The Holy Synod of the Russian Orthodox Church, at its meeting on March 22 in Moscow, appointed Hegumen Philaret (Bulekov), who represented the Russian Orthodox Church at the Council of Europe and was rector of the Parish of All Saints in Strasbourg, as vice-chairman of the Department for External Church Relations. He will be replaced as representative to the Council of Europe and rector of All Saint's by Hegumen Philip (Riabykh), who was previously a DECR vice-chairman.

Hegumen Philaret (his secular name is Alexander Bulekov) was born in 1967 in Moscow. He finished Special Physics and Mathematics School No. 2 in Moscow in 1984. From 1984-1990 he studied physics at the Moscow State University. In 1991 he entered the Moscow Theological Seminary. In 1998 he graduated from the Moscow Theological Academy with the degree of Candidate of Theology. He worked at the Moscow Patriarchate's Publishing Department from 1988-1991. From 1991-1991 he worked as researcher of the DECR section for inter-Christian relations. He acted as DECR Communication Service director from 1993-1996. In 1996, he was awarded the Order of the Holy Prince Daniel of Moscow. He was ordained deacon in 1996. From 1997-1999 – secretary of the Moscow Patriarchate Representation to the Patriarch of Antioch and All the East in Damascus. From 2000-2004 – rector of the Parish of St. Sergius of Radonezh in Johannesburg, South Africa. In 2002 he was elevated to the rank of hegumen.

Since 2004 he worked as Russian Orthodox Church Representative to the Council of Europe and rector of the Parish of All Saints in Strasbourg.

*DECR Communication Service*

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