



## Metropolitan Hilarion of Volokolamsk: The Lord always waits for us

[gallery]

On 20 February 2011, the Sunday of the Prodigal Son, Metropolitan Hilarion of Volokolamsk, chairman of the Moscow Patriarchate's Department for External Church Relations (DECR), celebrated the Divine Liturgy at the Moscow Church of the "Joy to All the Afflicted" Icon of the Mother of God. Rev. Dimitry Ageyev, assistant to the DECR chairman; hieromonk Maksim (Voskresensky) from the Holy Mount Athos; ordained members of the DECR; and clerics of the church concelebrated.

On Saturday, February 19, Metropolitan Hilarion celebrated the All-Night Vigil at the same church.

The Moscow Synodal Choir conducted by the honoured artist of Russia Alexei Puzakov and the Children's and Youth Choir of the School of Religious Singing at the Moscow University's Church of St. Tatiana sang during the service.

After the divine service, rector of the church Metropolitan Hilarion addressed the worshippers with his archpastoral homily in which he explained the meaning of the Lord's Parable of the Prodigal Son and reminding them that the Lord always waits for us, as we are his beloved sons and daughters and is willing to forgive each one of us, if we repent.

"We are nearing Lent, and the Church nourishes us with such thoughts and feelings helping us to think about the quality of our life and to prepare for Lent, while remembering that our heavenly Father loves us, will never abandon us and is waiting to our repentance and conversion. May God grant us to be his worthy sons and daughters! If we sinned, we shall ask the Lord to forgive us and set us in the way leading to the Heavenly Kingdom," Metropolitan Hilarion said in conclusion of his homily.