



## **12th All-Diaspora Orthodox Youth Congress to take place this summer in Paris**

With the blessing of Patriarch Kirill of Moscow and All Russia and the First Hierarch of the Russian Church Outside Russia, Metropolitan Hilarion, the 12<sup>th</sup> All-Diaspora Orthodox Youth Congress will take place from July 1 to 8, 2011, in Paris.

All-Diaspora Congresses have been held since 1973 in the USA, Canada, Australia and Latin America. For the first time this forum will take place in Europe. Their delegates have always emphasized their belonging to the Russian Church. The Kursk Icon of Our Lady 'Found in the Roots' has always been brought to each of these congresses as the Guide of the Russian Diaspora. During the Congresses, Orthodox divine services are celebrated. During the sessions and in intervals between them, young representatives of the Russian diaspora have always had an opportunity for talks with Orthodox hierarchs and priests.

The 12<sup>th</sup> Congress will have as its motto 'New Forms of Youth Service to the Holy Church. Preserving the Purity of Orthodoxy'. As Archpriest Andrei Sommer said in an interview to the ROCOR official website, one of the tasks of the Congress is to enable young people from various countries to meet one another and to introduce them to various, mostly new, forms of missionary work.

A distinctive feature of the 12<sup>th</sup> Congress as compared to previous ones is that the Orthodox youth of the Russian Diaspora will meet for the first time after the full canonical communion was achieved between the Moscow Patriarchate and the ROCOR. The Moscow Patriarchate's dioceses abroad, especially that of Korsun, and the ROCOR dioceses will take an active part in the Congress. Among those invited are also representatives of the Exarchate of Russian Churches in Western Europe (Patriarchate of Constantinople).

In his letter to the ROCOR First Hierarch Metropolitan Hilarion, welcoming the convening of the Congress, His Holiness Patriarch Kirill noted, 'It is gratifying that the long traditions of forums uniting young Christian of the whole Russian Orthodox Church are continued and developed in the center of

Europe. I invoke God's blessing upon the organizers and all the participants in this event'.

The forum has also been supported by Presidential Envoy for Central Russia G. Poltavchenko, as well as a number of governmental and public organizations both inside and outside Russia. The Russian Embassy in France has pledged its help with logistics. Among those who will give financial support to the Congress's organization and its pilgrimage and cultural program are the St. Andrew the First-Called Foundation, Russian-Mount Athos Society, Fund for Assistance to ROCOR and other organizations and individuals.

The Congress is planned to gather 100-120 people. According to Father Andrei Sommer, it is planned to hold such a forum in Russia in the foreseeable future.

*DECR Communication Service*

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