Metropolitan Hilarion awards Marquise Immacolata Solaro del Borgo with an order of the Russian Orthodox Church

On 25 January 2011, a ceremony of awarding Marquise Immacolata Solaro del Borgo with the order of St. Olga Equal-to-the-Apostles, 3rd class, took place at the Moscow Patriarchate's Department for External Church. Metropolitan Hilarion congratulated the Marquise on her 80th birthday and underscored that her life was an example of the true Christian ministry.

In his welcoming speech, Metropolitan Hilarion noted her long work for the good of Russia and the Russian Orthodox Church. After the Chernobyl disaster of 1986, the Marquise arranged an aid to children who suffered from the disaster. Over 3.000 children got medical treatment in Italy. Thus her cooperation with the Russian Church has begun.

As Orthodoxy began to revive, the Marquise initiated the transfer of old relics to the churches and monasteries of the Russian Church. At present, relics of the saints brought to Russia thanks to her can be found at the Moscow St. Daniel's Monastery, the Monastery St. Nicholas in Ugreshi, the Convent of St. John the Baptist, and at the Church of the "Joy to All the Afflicted" Icon of the Mother of God, as well as at the Cathedral of the Exultation of the Cross in Kazan, the Monastery of the Assumption in Sviyazhsk, Kazan diocese, and at the church in Chelyabinsk, Voronezh, and Kaliningrad.

Metropolitan Hilarion emphasized that the Russian Orthodox Church, being aware of its duty to bring witness about Christ to the modern secular world, develops cooperation with the Roman Catholic Church and considers it as a natural ally in upholding the true Christian tradition. The Marquise has

brought her valuable contribution to the development of this cooperation.

“In consideration of you long work for the good of the Russian Orthodox Church and in connection with your 80th birthday, His Holiness Patriarch Kirill of Moscow and All Russia awarded you the Order of St. Princess Olga, Equal-to-the-Apostles, 3rd class,” the DECR chairman said and wished Marquise Solaro del Borgo good health, peace, prosperity and God’s help for many good years.

Marquise Immacolata Solaro del Borgo cordially thanked His Holiness the Patriarch and Metropolitan Hilarion for high appreciation of her modest work aimed at the improvement of relations between the Roman Catholic and the Russian Orthodox Churches.

Taking part in the awarding ceremony were Archbishop Antonio Mennini, the Apostolic Nuncio to the Russian Federation; the first counsellor of the Embassy of the Order of Malta to the Russian Federation Nicola Savoretti; Rev. Dimitry Sizonenko, DECR acting secretary for Inter-Christian relations; and nuns of the Convent of St. John the Baptist.

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