Metropolitan Hilarion completes his visit to Lithuania

On January 11th, 2011, Metropolitan Hilarion of Volokolamsk, head of the Moscow Patriarchate's Department for External Church Relations, currently in Lithuania with the blessing of His Holiness Patriarch Kirill of Moscow and All Russia and at the invitation of the Catholic Episcopal Conference of Lithuania, visited Orthodox holy sites of Vilnius.

The DECR chairman venerated the Ostrobramska Icon of the Mother of God above the gates of the old town venerated by the Orthodox and the Catholics alike.

Metropolitan Hilarion also visited the Cathedral at the Monastery of the Holy Spirit where he took his monastic vows and was ordained hierodeacon in 1987. He venerated the relics of Ss Anthony, John and Eustaphius of Vilna, said a requiem prayer at the tomb of Metropolitan Joseph (Semashko, +1868), and a Litiya at the tomb of Archbishop Viktorin (Belyaev, +1989) of Vilnius and Lithuania.

That same day Metropolitan Hilarion visited other Orthodox churches of Vilnius, including the Cathedral of the Dormition where he was ordained hieromonk in 1987.

On January 12, Metropolitan Hilarion met with the newly appointed Archbishop Innokenty of Vilnius and Lithuania at his residence at the Monastery of the Holy Spirit.

In the evening, the DECR chairman left for Moscow. Seeing him off at the airport were Bishop Gintaras Grušas, secretary general of the Episcopal Conference and military ordinary for Lithuania; Auxiliary Bishop of Vilnius and rector of the Cathedral Arūnas Poniškaitis (Roman Catholic Church); and

archpriest Vladimir Seliavko, secretary of the Diocese of Vilnius and Lithuania of the Russian Orthodox Church.

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