



## Metropolitan Hilarion begins his visit to Lithuania

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On January 10<sup>th</sup>, 2011, Metropolitan Hilarion of Volokolamsk, head of the Moscow Patriarchate's Department for External Church Relations, arrived in Vilnius with the blessing of His Holiness Patriarch Kirill of Moscow and All Russia and at the invitation of the Catholic Episcopal Conference of Lithuania.

Meeting the DECR chairman at the airport were Archbishop Sigitas Tamkevičius of Kaunas and Bishop Gintaras Grušas, secretary general of the Episcopal Conference and military ordinary for Lithuania, as well as archpriest Vladimir Seliavko, secretary of the Vilnius-Lithuania diocese of the Russian Orthodox Church.

Metropolitan Hilarion's schedule in Lithuania includes his participation in the Inter-Christian Conference on family problems in Kaunas, meetings with the Archbishop of Vilnius Cardinal Audrys Bačkis and Archbishop Sigitas Tamkevičius of Kaunas, visit to the Seim of the Lithuanian Republic and meeting with the speaker, Ms. Irena Degutene, and also a visit of the Monastery of the Holy Spirit in Vilnius and the Cathedral of the Annunciation in Kaunas (Russian Orthodox Church).

Accompanying the DECR chairman are hieromonk Ioann (Guaita), a staff member of DECR secretariat for Inter-Christian relations, and hierodeacon Ioann (Kopeikin), assistant to the DECR chairman.