



## His Holiness Patriarch Kirill leads second session of the Intercouncil Presence' Presidium

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On 16 December 2010, the second meeting of the Intercouncil Presence's Presidium chaired by His Holiness Patriarch Kirill of Moscow and All Russia began its work in the Red Hall of the Cathedral of Christ the Saviour.

His Holiness reminded the participants of the story of the Intercouncil Presence. Clerics and the flock of the Russian Orthodox Church expressed their wish through the members of the Local Council-2009 'to analyze regularly, rather than from time, the acute and urgent problems and to discuss challenges of the present time.'

The Primate of the Russian Orthodox Church underscored that the Intercouncil presence should focus attention of the answers to many topical problems, such as: What place should be the Local and Bishops' Councils occupy in the highest church government? What criteria should be applied in the election of patriarchs? How can the Church render social and material support to the clergy? What kind of conditions could be used for ordination of unmarried persons? What is the practice of preparation for the Sacraments, for instance, for the Holy Communion?"

His Holiness said: "When we discuss problems and formulate solutions, we bring witness of the Church being the One Body rather than isolated communities."

The Intercouncil Presence is a unique system of comprehension of the current problems. "One should not be afraid of a daring statement that it was established for the first time in history and that the Russian Orthodox Church is the only one in the Orthodox world where it functions," the primate of the Russian Orthodox Church added.

According to him, some fifty meetings of commissions, round tables and conferences in the framework of the Intercouncil Presence have been held during almost a year since the first meeting of the Presidium. They were attended by one hundred and fifty bishops, clerics, monks, and laymen. Thirteen commissions issued over twenty documents on the theological, pastoral, administrative, canonical, social, and information problems. These documents will be discussed at the second session of the Presidium and considered at the plenary session of the Intercouncil Presence that will take place in

Moscow on 28-30 January 2011 prior to the Bishops' Council of the Russian Orthodox Church.

Participants in the second session of the Presidium, which consists of twenty-nine persons, will specify the themes for the work of the Intercouncil Presence's commissions in 2011 and determine their membership. Also discussed will be principles of coverage of the Intercouncil Presence's activities, press office of the Patriarch of Moscow and All Russia reports.

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