



## Metropolitan Hilarion meets with the Ambassador of Czechia to Russia

[gallery]

On 8 December 2010, Metropolitan Hilarion of Volokolamsk, head of the Moscow Patriarchate's Department for External Church Relations, met with H.E. Petr Kolář, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Czech Republic to the Russian Federation. They were joined in the meeting that took place at the DECR premises by archpriest Aleksiy Yuschenko, representative of the Orthodox Church of the Czech Lands and Slovakia to the Patriarch of Moscow and All Russia; the third secretary of the Embassy of Czechia in Russia Petr Pirunčik; and M. Palacio, a staff member of the DECR Secretariat for far abroad countries.

Metropolitan Hilarion thanked Ambassador Kolář for his visit paid soon after his appointment the head of the Czech diplomatic mission in Moscow. The DECR chairman told the guest of the relations of the Moscow Patriarchate with the Orthodox Church of the Czech Lands and Slovakia and the Catholic Church in Czechia, as well as of the situation of the Russian-speaking Orthodox community in the country.

Ambassador Kolář thanked Metropolitan Hilarion for his personal participation in purchasing a new building for the residence of Archbishops of Prague by the Orthodox Church of the Czech Lands and Slovakia with the assistance of the Moscow Patriarchate. He called this assistance an example of honourable attitude of the Russian Church to her sister Church. The Ambassador said further that during his short as yet stay in Russia he visited many cities and Orthodox churches in each of them, adding, "I see serious changes for the better in the life of the Church compared with the Soviet period." He remarked that the Russian Church plays an important part in the development of relations between peoples of Russia and Czechia.

Metropolitan Hilarion gave Ambassador Kolář his book, "The Spiritual World of St. Isaac the Syrian" in the Czech language and the CD with his "St Matthew Passion" Oratorio. The Ambassador of the Czech Republic presented the DECR chairman with a set of New Year decoration made of Czech glass and an illustrated book about Prague.