



## **Metropolitan Hilarion: the Lord has given Muscovites special happiness to be subjects to pastoral authority of Patriarch Kirill not only as head of the Church but also bishop of Moscow**

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On November 20, 2010, the eve of the Synaxis of Archangel Michael and Other Bodiless Powers, Metropolitan Hilarion of Volokolamsk, head of the Moscow Patriarchate's department for external church relations, officiated at All-Night Vigil at the church of Our Lady the Joy to All the Afflicted-in-Ordynka.

On that day, His Holiness Patriarch Kirill of Moscow and All Russia marked his 64<sup>th</sup> birthday. In all the Russian Orthodox churches a prayer was lifted up for the Primate. In the church of Our Lady the Joy to All the Afflicted-in-Ordynka, an ardent prayer was lifted up for His Holiness Patriarch Kirill.

After the All-Night Vigil, Metropolitan Hilarion delivered an archpastoral homily, saying in particular:

“His Holiness the Patriarch has been granted to the Russian Orthodox Church as its angel and first hierarch. Today we can see how much His Holiness works, how much he travels to preach and to meet all kinds of people: clergy, youth including those who are far from the Church, and his voice is heard today not only in Russia but also in countries of the near and far abroad.

The patriarch, according to the apostle, should be *all things to all people* (1 Cor. 9:22) so that at least some may be saved. His spiritual mission is to preach the Word of God and to tell people about the truth of God. He should tell this truth of God wherever it is possible and necessary, and also through the mass media. For many years His Holiness Patriarch Kirill has led the TV program ‘A Pastor’s Word’ from which people who cannot see the Patriarch live can hear his voice and come in touch with the life of prayer and worship he leads and hear his sermon.

The Lord has given Muscovites a special happiness of being subjects to the pastoral authority of His Holiness Kirill as not only head of the Church but also bishop of Moscow. We have an opportunity to see our Primate in Moscow churches. Quite recently, on the Day of the Miracle-working Icon the Joy to All the Afflicted, His Holiness visited our church. Several thousands of people who came to that church on that day to worship together with their Primate could hear his inspired words and receive his primatial blessing.

His Holiness Patriarch Kirill celebrated his birthday in his native city, St. Petersburg, where he spent his childhood and youth and received theological education. He received all the three degrees of priesthood from the hands of the ever-memorable Metropolitan Nikodim (Rotov). For ten years he was rector of St. Petersburg Theological Academy and Seminary. He comes back to that city again and again to meet his flock and to visit his family – his brother Archpriest Nikolay Gundyayev, who marked recently his 70<sup>th</sup> birthday, and his other relatives”.

Metropolitan Hilarion called the faithful to pray for His Holiness Patriarch Kirill ‘not only as head of the Russian Orthodox Church but also father, remembering that he needs our prayer because he needs special strength to carry out the service which is beyond human resources’, and wished His Holiness many good years of life.

*DECR Communication Service*

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