



theory, either a mythology, or a ritual, but life itself." The Church and all her members are called to witness the fullness of this life."

"It is important to make the ascetic message of the Church actual for modern man, to help people understand that there is no human life outside this norm of life, that survival of human civilization is conditioned by this order of life that God has given to people in His Word," His Holiness said.

Metropolitan Philaret of Minsk and Slutsk, Chairman of the Synodal Biblical and Theological Commission, presented the schedule and rules of the conference.

Taking part in the conference sponsored by the Synodal Biblical and Theological Commission are representatives of the Local Orthodox Churches, and Russian and foreign theologians. The St. Gregory the Theologian Charity Foundation supports the conference.

Publication of the documents of the last conference held in 2007 on the church teaching on sacraments was timed to the present forum.

On the first day of the conference, the participants heard report by representatives of the Orthodox sister Churches.

On November 18, the last day of the Conference, a round table on topical problems of common Orthodox witness to the world will be chaired by Metropolitan Hilarion of Volokolamsk, head of the Moscow Patriarchate's Department for External Church Relations. The conference will complete its work by issuing final document.

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