Metropolitan Hilarion begins his visit to Japan

On 9 September 2010, Metropolitan Hilarion of Volokolamsk, head of the Moscow Patriarchate's Department for External Church Relations, arrived in Japan with the blessing of His Holiness Patriarch Kirill of Moscow and All Russia and at the invitation of His Eminence Daniel, Archbishop of Tokyo and Metropolitan of All Japan, to take part in the celebration of the 40th anniversary of the canonization of St. Nicholas of Japan, the autonomous status of the Orthodox Church of Japan, and the establishment of the Russian Orthodox Church Metochion in Tokyo.

The delegation accompanying Metropolitan Hilarion includes Archbishop Feognost of Sergiev Posad, abbot of the Laura of the Holy Trinity and St. Sergius; the DECR deputy chairman archpriest Nikolai Balashov; DECR chairman's assistants hierodeacon Ioann (Kopeikin) and L. Sevastianov, and a staff member of the DECR Secretariat for Inter-Orthodox relations D. Petrovsky.

Bishop Seraphim (Tsujie) of Sendai and Eastern Japan, consul general of the Russian Federation in Osaka I. Prokhorov, and clerics of the Orthodox Church of Japan met the DECR chairman and members of the delegation at the airport in Osaka.

The visit will last four days. On October 10, Metropolitan Hilarion will concelebrate the Divine Liturgy with Metropolitan Daniel, Archbishop Feognost and Bishop Seraphim at the Church of the Intercession in Osaka. On October 11, he will visit Kyoto and celebrate a prayer service at the local Orthodox church. On October 12, the DECR chairman will visit Tokyo and celebrate the Divine Liturgy at the Church of St. Alexander Nevsky – the metochion of the Russian Orthodox Church. That same day he will celebrate prayer services at the tombs of St. Nicholas of Japan, Metropolitans Sergiy (Tikhomirov) and Theodosius (Nagasima) and will visit the Cathedral of the Resurrection of Christ ('Nikolai-do').

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