Metropolitan Hilarion of Volokolamsk is awarded honorary doctorate by the Faculty of Theology of Catalonia

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On 5 October 2010, Metropolitan Hilarion of Volokolamsk, head of the Moscow Patriarchate's Department for External Church Relations, was awarded honorary doctorate by the Faculty of Theology of Catalonia.

Taking part in the ceremony were the chancellor of the Faculty, Mons. Lluis Marnitez Sistach, Cardinal Archbishop of Barcelona; dean of the Faculty Dr. Armand Puig Tàrrech, vice-dean Dr. Joan Planellas, and head of the systematic theology department Dr. Jaume Fontbona. Present at the ceremony that took place at *Aula Magna* were all bishops of Catalonia, members of the academic board, faculty and students.

Also present at the ceremony were Cardinal Roger Etchegaray representing the Roman Curia; Cardinal Archbishop of Bordeaux Jean-Pierre Ricard; spiritual councilor of the Community of St. Egidio Bishop Vincenzo Paglia; Metropolitan Polycarp of Spain and Portugal (Patriarchate of Constantinople); Archbishop Filipp of Poltava and Kremenchug (Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the Moscow Patriarchate); the Archbishop of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Finland Kari Mäkinen; and other representatives of different Protestant denominations. 150 persons saw direct video cast of the ceremony in another hall.

The vice dean announced the decision of the faculty to award Metropolitan Hilarion with the title of doctor; and the dean and the head of the systematic theology department invited Metropolitan Hilarion to enter the hall.

The dean read out *Laudatio* –Metropolitan Hilarion's curriculum vitae with the analysis of his scholarly work and reasons for the academic board's decision to award him with the title of doctor. Cardinal Martinez Sistach read the formulae in Latin. Metropolitan Hilarion was given the insignia: mantle, ring, gloves, beret, and diploma of the Faculty.

The DECR chairman delivered a lecture on the significance of the patristic heritage for the modern world

in English.

He said that the study of the Western and Eastern Fathers of the Church allows us to understand the faith of the Fathers, which the spiritual writers of the Eastern and Western Churches have preserved for us, and to comprehend the treasure of the tradition to which each of us belongs. Metropolitan Hilarion underscored the significance of the patristic studies in the 20th century as necessary for "neo-patristic synthesis," of which the renowned Russian theologians wrote.

In conclusion of the ceremony, the Faculty's choir performed "Beneath thy mercy..." composed by Metropolitan Hilarion and the traditional *Gaudeamus igitur*.

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