



Patriarch Kirill's congratulatory message to Primate of Serbian Orthodox Church on occasion of Patriarchal enthronement

His Holiness Patriarch Kirill of Moscow and All Russia sent the following congratulatory message to the Primate of the Serbian Orthodox Church on the occasion of his enthronement which took place at the Patriarchate of Pec on October 3, 2010. The message was read out at the ceremony by Metropolitan Hilarion of Volokolamsk, head of the Moscow Patriarchate's department for external church relation:

To His Holiness Irinej

Archbishop of Pec

Metropolitan of Belgrade and Karlovcy

Patriarch of Serbia

Your Holiness,

Dear Brother and Concelebrant beloved in the Holy Spirit:

On behalf of the bishops, pastors and the Plenitude of the Russian Orthodox Church, I heartily congratulate Your Holiness on your solemn ascent to the historic throne of Patriarchs of Serbia.

The Patriarchal enthronement of your Holiness is traditionally celebrated in the sacred land of Kosovo and Metohija, in the very heart of Serbian Orthodoxy, in the walls of the old Patriarchate of Pec. It has always been characteristic of the Serbian church people to keep the lively feeling of spiritual unity with the old patriarchs and ascetics who have glorified this land. Their prayerful intercession and paternal support helped Orthodox Christian under the Ottoman yoke and in the years of godless power as well as the hard times which have befallen Serbian in the last decades. Kosovo, a land of feats and glory of

saints, has lived in the hearts of every Orthodox Serb in all times. Here there are the roots which continue to nourish the rich spiritual tradition of the Church of great Saint Savva.

Elevating you to the Patriarchal throne, the archpastors of the Serbian Church have placed on you the lofty responsibility for the fate of Serbian Orthodoxy in this difficult and dramatic period in its centuries-old history. The faithful of Holy Rus', who have survived a tragedy of the destruction and defilement of their forefathers' shrines, do understand the feelings which overfill the hearts of our Serbian brothers. The prayers of millions of the faithful of the Russian Orthodox Church will always accompany your primatial efforts and concerns.

Your Holiness, on this solemn day for the whole Serbian Church, the day of the Patriarchal enthronement, I lift up to the Lord Jesus Christ my ardent prayers that He may send you physical strength, blessed long life and His all-powerful help for many good years of your primatial ministry.

With invariable brotherly love in the Lord,

+ KIRILL,

Patriarch of Moscow and All Russia

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