



Metropolitan Hilarion's address to entrants to Church Post-Graduate School

On September 3, 2010, Metropolitan Hilarion of Volokolamsk in his capacity of rector of the Sts Cyril and Methodius Post-Graduate and Doctoral School addressed the entrants. He said:

“Dear Fathers, Brothers and Sisters, we are entering the post-graduate school as its second intake. As you know, the Sts Cyril and Methodius Post-Graduate and Doctoral School was founded last year at the initiative of His Holiness Patriarch Kirill of Moscow and All Russia. It offers training to mature people with higher theological or secular education or both.

The main task of the Post-Graduate School is to train highly qualified personnel for the Russian Orthodox Church both in administration and scholarship and church diplomatic work.

At present the Post-Graduate School offers three courses: a Doctor's course – it is the only opportunity in the Russian Orthodox Church to get a higher theological degree, a Candidate's course and an Advanced Studies course, which does not train for an academic degree but offers special courses on various disciplines concerning the service of priests, teachers, missionaries, etc.

Today we are holding interviews. I will meet each of you to find out whether you suit to be our student or not. I wish to warn you that some of you will fail to enter the school and ask you to show understanding.

Yesterday you wrote compositions, and some of you who took that first exam, including those who were entering the Doctor's program, have failed it. It is a serious and not very impressive result. Those who failed will not enter our school this year.

We have set a rather high standard for our future post-graduates because we don't want the academic degrees to be profaned and to have Doctors and Candidates of Theology who wrote their written paper poorly.

Certainly, the entrance examinations and interviews already identify partly the level of future post-graduates and those who will work for the Doctor's degree. But the training to follow will also reveal this level. I would like to warn those who will enter the school that in the end of your first

year you are to take exams after which more students will drop out. I ask you to be ready for it and treat it with understanding.

In our Post-Graduate and Doctoral School, we give great attention to the study of foreign languages. I believe every post-graduate should have a good command of at least one foreign language and to have one or two more languages in a passive form to be able to read and work with academic literature in them.

I would like to remind you that His Holiness Patriarch Kirill has already asked on several occasions not to see in the Church Post-Graduate School a kind of a springboard for one's career. Certainly, a church career, as His Holiness very well put it when on the Solovki Islands, is not something that has a direct bearing on one's spiritual life or scholarly achievements. A church career is something that happens of itself, independent of one's will. One works where the Church assigns one. If you are invited to Moscow it means that you will serve in Moscow. If you are sent to the Kola Peninsula, you will serve in the Kola Peninsula. If you are elevated to the highest rank, take it with humbleness. If you are not, take with humbleness as well and gratitude to God.

Many of you will have to combine study at the School with important church responsibilities you already bear. It is a special skill, which will take, among other things, the ability to organize your time and exercise self-discipline. Even if you have an important church responsibility, we will demand that you study wholeheartedly. It also applies to the study of foreign languages.

I wish you all God's help at entrance examinations, and may the Lord bless our common efforts".