



His Holiness Patriarch Kirill of Moscow and All Russia arrives in Odessa

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His Holiness Patriarch Kirill of Moscow and All Russia arrived in Odessa on 20 July 2010. He was met at the airport by His Beatitude Metropolitan Vladimir of Kiev and All Ukraine; Metropolitans Agafangel of Odessa and Izmail, Lazar of Simferopol and the Crimea, and Ilarion of Donetsk and Mariupol; Archbishops Ionafan of Tulchin and Bratslav, Varfolomei of Rovno and Ostrog, and Mitrofan of Belaya Tserkov and Boguslav, chancellor of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church; Bishop Mitrofan of Gorlovka and Slavyansk, Bishop Evlogiy of Sumy and Akhtyrka, Bishop Aleksandr of Pereyaslav-Khmelnitsky, a vicar of the Kiev diocese; and clergymen of the diocese.

Meeting the Primate of the Russian Orthodox Church were also deputy prime minister of Ukraine for regional politics V. Tikhonov, chairman of the State Committee for Nationalities and Religions Yu. Bogutsky, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Russian Federation to Ukraine M. Zurabov, Consul General of the Russian Federation in Odessa A. Grachev, head of the Odessa Regional State Administration E. Matviychuk, Odessa Mayor E. Gurvits, and other officials.

The delegation accompanying the Primate of the Russian Orthodox Church includes Metropolitan Varsonofiy of Saransk and Mordovia, Chancellor of the Moscow Patriarchate; Metropolitan Hilarion of Volokolamsk, Chairman of the Moscow Patriarchate's Department for External Church Relations; Archbishop Feognost of Sergiev Posad, abbot of the Laura of the Holy Trinity and St. Sergius; Bishop Sergiy of Solnechnogorsk, head of the Moscow Patriarchate's Administrative Secretariat; archpriest Vsevolod Chaplin, chairman of the Synodal Department for Church-Society Relations; Mr. Vladimir Legoida, chairman of the Synodal Information Department; archpriest Nikolai Balashov, deputy chairman of the DECR MP; Rev. Igor Yakimchuk, DECR secretary for Inter-Christian Relations; hieromonk Antoniy (Sevryuk), head of the Patriarch's personal secretariat, and M. Kuksov, a staff member of the same Secretariat.

A visit to Odessa begins the programme of His Holiness Patriarch Kirill's archpastoral visits to the dioceses of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church, including the Odessa, Dnepropetrovsk, and Kiev dioceses.