



## **Metropolitan Hilarion: commandment to honour fathers and mothers should be in the plenitude of power in different cultures and centuries**

On 5 June 2010, Metropolitan Hilarion of Volokolamsk, head of the Moscow Patriarchate's Department for External Church Relations, spoke about the upbringing of children on "The Church and the World" TV programme at the request of the viewers.

Metropolitan Hilarion reminded them of the words from the Holy Scriptures: 'Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right... And, fathers, do not provoke your children to anger, but bring them up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord' (Eph. 6:1, 4). "The meaning of these words is that the methods of upbringing should be adapted to the psychology of a child. It is not enough to demand obedience for the sake of obedience. Rather, it is necessary to use a system of education in which a child will understand what it would be better for him to obey his parents." Metropolitan Hilarion underscored that though cultural paradigms transform in different epochs and due to national particular features, there are still unshakeable postulates, such as the commandment of God 'honour your father and your mother' (Ex. 20:12) that should be upheld in all cultures and in all centuries.

Discussed was the problem of juvenile justice as its introduction is being widely debated in Russia. Fears were expressed that with the introduction of this system the life of families with children will be put under control of the state bodies of custody and that the proposed rehabilitation of the minors is not perfect and could induce children to demonstrate a deviant behaviour rather than a correct one. The champions of this system say that its introduction is justified as far as the minor criminals are concerned as it will help avoid repressive measures and bring them back to normal life and that adequate programmes will help correct the behaviour of a "difficult" child better than the reformatory institutions.

"It is indeed true that a family cannot live in perpetual fear of someone coming and taking a child away if the parents cannot afford to satisfy all needs of their child. In this case, certain agencies will be given an opportunity to control the number of children, but this is inadmissible since people should be free to raise their families as they consider proper," the DECR chairman said.

He shares the opinion of those who believe that children in reformatory institutions do not become immune to crime. "On the contrary, they mostly remain within this vicious circle. As adults, they live by the interests of the criminal world and continue to commit crimes, thus returning to prison again and

again. The task is to save them, to take a child who committed a crime, away from criminal milieu. It is necessary to educate and reform in a way different from the one in the reformatories as they do not reform anyone.

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