DECR Chairman's message to His Eminence Metropolitan Ambrose of Korea, Seoul, to the participants in the celebration of the 110th anniversary of Orthodoxy in Korea

Your Eminence,

brothers the archpastors, all-honourable pastors,

beloved in Christ brothers and sisters:

I wholeheartedly greet the participants in the celebration of the 100th anniversary of Orthodoxy in Korea.

The first Divine Liturgy was celebrated on the territory of the Russian Embassy in Seoul by archimandrite Khrisanf (Schetkovsky) on 17 February 1900.

While solemnly celebrating this event, we recall pastors who were the first to preach Orthodoxy to the Korean people in the second half of the 19th century. The Russian missionaries, obeying the Saviour's commandment to "go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit" (Mt 28:19), started to preach the Kingdom of God to the Koreans who lived in Russia. The Korean Orthodox communities have come to life in Transbaikalia, Amur region and the Ussuri land. Churches were built for them, and Orthodox books and magazines in the Korean language were published.

Later, the Russian Ecclesiastical Mission in Korea was established with the task to care for the Russian Orthodox Christians on the Korean peninsula and to preach Orthodoxy to the local non-Christians.

The present gathering gives us an opportunity to remember with prayers the pious pastors who carried out apostolic work in the Country of Morning Freshness with self-denial and love to their Korean flock. These are Bishop Peter (Ivanovsky), archimandrite Khrisanf (Schetkovsky), archimandrite Feodosiy (Perevalov), archimandrite Polikarp (Priymak), and their co-workers.

The seeds of faith sown by the Russian missionaries have grown up and brought harvest. We see today that Orthodoxy is becoming firmly established in Korea and is no long a foreign faith here. Today the name of God is glorified by the Orthodox Koreans, and prayers are offered up in churches. A lot of work

is to be done, but we can see even now that the sown God's word falls not 'on the rock or among thorns, but into good soil' (cf. Lk 6:8).

It is gratifying to realize that the Orthodox Koreans keep love to the Russian Orthodox Church that has begun her works in this land. Our Church is exerting her efforts to facilitate the spiritual rapprochement of the people of Russia and Korea and to restore spiritual ties that bound them in the past.

I prayerfully wish the Orthodox Church in Korea prosperity and successful spreading, and to all those gathered – the abundant God's help that gives you strength for the apostolic ministry in Korea to the glory of the Saviour. May the God-loving people of Korea produce a hundredfold through the prayers and work of their God-loving pastors for the triumph of the faith prepared for all children of Christ in His eternal Kingdom.

/+Hilarion/

Metropolitan of Volokolamsk

Chairman

Department for External Church Relations

Moscow Patriarchate

Source: https://mospat.ru/en/news/57147/