



## **Metropolitan Hilarion of Volokolamsk meets with professors and students of St. Petersburg Theological Schools**

On May 31, 2010, Metropolitan Hilarion of Volokolamsk in his capacity of rector of the Sts Kirill and Methodius Church Post-Graduate and Doctoral School met with professors and students of St. Petersburg Seminary and Theological Academy.

On behalf of the faculty, the rector of the schools, Bishop Ambrose of Gatchina, welcomed the metropolitan. His Eminence in his address spoke about the progress made in the reform of theological education in the Russian Orthodox Church.

“You may know what a great importance is attached today to the development of education throughout the world. In the modern, rapidly changing post-industrial society, knowledge and skills acquire an increasing value. Information, technology, scientific achievements become an ever more powerful capital in the world market. Among the most expensive corporations in the world are no longer those which mine and process raw materials, but companies working with information. Thus, education, science and technologies prove to be today a decisive factor in the strategic development of countries and nations”, he said.

According to the metropolitan, the development of theological education and scholarship in the Church at present is a strategic task. “And what is the place of education and science in the Church today? I am deeply convinced that it is even more important than it was in the Soviet society. Why is it? – Because theological education has a constitutive importance for the Church. It ensures continuity of what we loftily call Tradition”.

“Just image for a moment what will happen if we lose the ability to understand and it means to hand down to the coming generations the doctrine, the heritage of holy fathers, and the liturgical, canonical and iconographic heritage of the Church? We will cease to be a Church”, he continued.

“To be a Church so that we could be worthy of our predecessors, we should reverentially accept and thoroughly assimilate the spiritual and theological legacy of those great people of the Church who served God before us and bore witness to Him”, he said.

Metropolitan Hilarion emphasized that today’s Church is not an abstract organization. “The Church is

you yourselves! You will become her support tomorrow, her basis, and her priests. You need to reverentially accept the treasure of church tradition from the previous generation, to preserve it piously and to hand it down to the next generation, conveying with it the key to its understanding”, His Eminence noted.

The supreme authority of the Church poses before seminaries today a serious task to train the pastors who could be able to serve in the modern situation, bringing the word of God to modern man, Metropolitan Hilarion remarked. Mastering the totality of theological, church-practical and general humanitarian knowledge should be combined with true churchliness, love of prayer and serious ascetic skills.

The rector of the Post-Graduate School then spoke about his school and its requirements to entrants.

Answering a question from one of the students, Metropolitan Hilarion reminded the audience that the Church Post-Graduate and Doctoral School actively developed cooperation with secular universities inside and outside Russia. The metropolitan reported that cooperation agreements had already been signed with the Russian Public Service Academy and the Russian Social University and solid relations had been established with Moscow State University, Moscow Institute of International Relations and some other universities in Russia. He said it was important that graduation certificates granted by the Church Post-Graduate School be recognized by leading Western universities in which there are theological departments. Negotiations about it are held for instance with the University of Friburg in Switzerland.

*DECR Communication Service*

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