Concert of Russian spiritual music in Vatican

[gallery]

A concert of Russian spiritual music took place on 20 May 2010 at the Vatican's Paul VI Hall. It was attended by Pope Benedict XVI, the College of Cardinals members, diplomatic representatives to the Holy See and numerous guests from various countries around the world.

Among the audience were also Archbishop Kirill of Yaroslavl and Rostov, Archbishop Feognost of Sergiev Posad and numerous pilgrims from the Russian Orthodox Church who have come to Rome for the concert. Altogether there were over seven thousand people.

The concert was organized by the Moscow Patriarchate's department for external church relations, the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity and the Pontifical Council for Culture, with the participation of St. Gregory the Theologian's Foundation.

Before the concert, DECR chairman Metropolitan Hilarion of Volokolamsk read out **a message from His Holiness Patriarch Kirill of Moscow and All Russia**. Then he addressed himself to the head of the Roman Catholic Church in Italian, saying,

'Today's concert is organized in the context of cultural relations existing between the Roman Catholic Church and the Moscow Patriarchate. Relations between our two Churches are developing today, and I hope they will continue developing in all directions covering all the aspects of church life. It is my conviction that to work together the Orthodox and the Catholics should not wait for a moment when all our theological differences disappear. We cannot harbor illusions that it will happen soon. However, we should already today work as allies rather than rivals, especially in Europe.

'Your Holiness, we support your call to the new evangelization of Europe. We are convinced however that no Church, even so large and strong as is the Roman Catholic Church, is capable of doing it single-handed. We should be together. We share the field of missionary work, which is today's de-Christianized Europe, as it has lost her religious, moral and cultural roots.

'In face of the secularization, consumerist ideology, moral relativism, only together we, the Orthodox and the Catholics, may show our contemporaries our Christian humanism and the moral values of the family, marital fidelity and life itself from the moment of its conception to its natural end, etc.

‘Acting in this way, we will not only help Europeans to rediscover the spiritual and moral meaning of their life but also help our continent experiencing a serious crisis of identity to rediscover its spiritual and cultural roots’.

Then the Russian National Orchestra, Moscow Synodal Choir and St. Petersburg’s Horn Capella performed works of Rimsky-Korsakov, Rachmaninoff, Tchaikovsky, Mussorgsky and other Russian composers. In conclusion of the concert, Metropolitan Hilarion’s symphony for a choir and orchestra *The Song of Ascents* was recited.

Closing the festive event, Pope Benedict XVI addressed himself to Metropolitan Hilarion and other guests, saying in particular, that he was deeply grateful to His Holiness Patriarch Kirill. He also thanked Metropolitan Hilarion for his greeting, his tireless work in the field of inter-Christian relations and his musical works appreciated by all on that day. The Pope also greeted the delegation of the Moscow Patriarchate, diplomats and ‘all bothers and sisters, first of all, the Russians who take part in today’s celebration’.

DECR Communication Service

Photos by Vladimir Khodakov

Source: https://mospat.ru/en/news/57236/