Orthodox music to be played in Vatican

A concert of Orthodox music will take place on May 20 at the Paul VI Hall in the Vatican. Compositions by Rimsky-Korsakov, Rachmaninoff, Tchaikovsky, Mussorgsky and other Russian composers will be performed by the Russian National Orchestra conducted by Carlo Ponti, Moscow Synodal Choir conducted by Alexy Puzakov and St. Petersburg's Horn Capella. The concert will be concluded with *The Song of Ascents*, Metropolitan Hilarion's symphony for a choir and orchestra.

The Paul VI Hall for pontifical audiences accommodates seven thousand people. Among the guests will be prelates of the Catholic Church and representatives of Christian communities in various countries. Pope Benedict XVI is expected to attend.

This cultural and educational event was initiated by the Russian Orthodox Church and the Roman Catholic Church. The idea of this large-scale significant cultural project was born during the meeting Metropolitan Hilarion had with Pope Benedict XVI last autumn, which pointed to the special importance of joint reflection on traditional Christian values and the need to preserve them in today's world. It was also agreed that the development of cultural relations between the Catholics and the Orthodox was precisely what serves this common goal. A decision was thus made to hold Days of Russian Spiritual Culture in spring 2010 in Rome. The concert of Russian music on May 20 will become its central event.

The concert is organized by St. Gregory the Theologian's Charity, which is widely known for its work to assert Christian values in today's world through international educational and cultural projects. This charity was founded in August 2009 with the blessing of His Holiness Patriarch Kirill of Moscow and All Russia.

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