



Metropolitan Hilarion of Volokolamsk meets with Moscow students and youth

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Metropolitan Hilarion of Volokolamsk, head of the Moscow Patriarchate's department for external church relations, met on 11 May 2010, with Moscow students and youth at the Moscow Aviation Institute's community club.

He read a lecture on 'A Prayer – A Talk with God' to students of the MAI and other colleges and universities in Moscow as well as Orthodox youth social network 'V kontakte' users who were among the initiators of the meeting.

After extending the Easter greeting to the audience, Metropolitan Hilarion shared with it the observation that many people who claim to be Orthodox Christian believers often have no experience of prayer. 'Some of them say: What is prayer for when God knows everything without it', while others admit: I am not against praying but I don't know any prayer'. Very many people deprive themselves of the spiritual treasure of prayer only because they either do not know why they should pray or how to pray', the metropolitan said and continued, 'The first thing I would like to say about prayer is that it is not a monologue but a dialogue. Some think that when they pray they make some requests from themselves, express some thoughts and conduct some monologue, pouring out their souls. Actually, a prayer is a dialogue, an opportunity to meet with Living God. In a prayer one turns to the God Who does not just exist somewhere but Who hears one and can respond to one's prayer'.

'In Christianity we turn to Living God Who is a Living Person, and in our prayer we communicate with God like we communicate with each other. Through prayer we find out that God participates in our life because when we pray we do not only turn to God but we also receive an answer from Him. This answer comes to us in very diverse forms. Sometimes it comes during the prayer, sometimes after the prayer in the form of some developments that take place in our life', the metropolitan said.

He warned the audience of a dissonance with prayer that one's life can come into, saying, 'Indeed, a prayer is an encounter. But to be ready for an encounter with God one should lead a certain way of life and be in an appropriate mood. Sometimes a person is loaded with earthly things so much that he cannot focus on God'.

Metropolitan Hilarion explained to the audience the meaning of basic Orthodox prayers, pointing to the

importance of prayer for one's family and friends, for the dead, for one's foes and to the importance of family prayer.

After the lecture His Eminence answered numerous questions. In conclusion of the meeting which lasted nearly two hours, the MAI Rector, Prof. A. Geraschenko, presented Metropolitan Hilarion with the MAI emblem, a model of aircraft. The DECR chairman gave to the institute's library a copy of his two-volume *Orthodoxy*.

A photo-exhibition was arranged by 'V konakte' youth network members in the community club's foyer as a gift to the Metropolitan. His Eminence thanked the young men and women for their efforts and expressed to them the wishes of daring and God's help in their creative service to the Church of Christ and the people of God.

DECR Communication Service

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