



Metropolitan Hilarion to visit Italy

Metropolitan Hilarion of Volokolamsk, Chairman of the Moscow Patriarchate's Department for External Church Relations, will visit Italy from May 14th to 20th, 2010, with the blessing of His Holiness Patriarch Kirill of Moscow and All Russia. The programme of his stay will include a visit to Milan, Turin, Bologna, Ravenna, and Rome, celebration of divine services, meeting with the hierarchs of the Roman Catholic Church, lectures at the university, and meetings with compatriots.

On Sunday, May 16, Metropolitan Hilarion will celebrate the Divine Liturgy at the Moscow Patriarchate parish in Milan.

The DECR chairman, together with hierarchs and clerics of the Moscow Patriarchate, will celebrate the Liturgy at the Shroud of Turin on May 18 at night, and will deliver a lecture at the University of Bologna that same day.

On May 19, the Chairman of the Moscow Patriarchate's Department for External Church Relations will visit Rome and meet with the President of the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity, Cardinal Walter Kasper, and heads of other department of the Roman Curia. Metropolitan Hilarion will also take part in the symposium on the "Witness of the Orthodox and the Catholics in Contemporary Europe" due to be held at the Church of St. Catherine at the Abamelek villa in Rome.

On May 20, a concert of Orthodox music will take place at the Paul VI Hall in the Vatican. The Russian National Orchestra, the Moscow Synodal Choir, and the St. Petersburg Horn Capella will perform pieces by Nikolai Rimsky-Korsakov, Sergei Rachmaninov, Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky, Modest Musorgsky, and other Russian composers. Metropolitan Hilarion's symphony "The Song of Ascents" for choir and orchestra will be performed at the end of the concert. Pope of Rome Benedict XVI is expected to attend.