



## Metropolitan Hilarion to lead celebrations marking 10th anniversary of Sts Peter and Paul Parish in Dublin

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Metropolitan Hilarion will be on a visit to Ireland from April 16 to 19, 2010. The chairman of the Moscow Patriarchate's department for external church relation will lead people in celebrations to mark the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Parish of Sts Peter and Paul in Dublin.

The first ever parish of the Moscow Patriarchate in Ireland was founded in 2001 when Metropolitan Kirill of Smolensk and Kaliningrad (now Patriarch of Moscow and All Russia) and Hegumen Hilarion (now Metropolitan of Volokolamsk) came to the island for a visit. Until 1997 there had been a parish of the Russian Orthodox Church Outside Russia in the Irish capital, which consisted mostly of Orthodox Irish people. At present, the church of Sts Peter and Paul in Dublin unites a multiethnic community made up of Russians, Ukrainians, Byelorussians, Moldovans, Serbs, Poles, Bulgarians, Georgians and Orthodox Irish people.

The name of St. Patrick, a saint of the early undivided Church, whose memory was celebrated recently by the Roman Catholic Church, plays a special uniting role. Festive events devoted to this saint were also held in Moscow. Among the participants was Rev. George Zavershinsky, DECR communications director, who had served in Ireland for over seven years, founding Orthodox communities not only in Dublin but also in Cork, Waterford, Galway, Stradbally and Belfast. Father George expressed hope that with time there would be Orthodox churches dedicated to St. Patrick in Moscow and other Russian cities, while in Ireland Russian culture and Orthodox tradition would be represented more fully.

This and other matters significant for the faith and culture of both Russian and Irish people will be discussed during the meetings Metropolitan Hilarion will have with Irish President Mary McAleese and Roman Catholic Archbishop Dermot Martin of Dublin. They will also discuss the forthcoming September visit to Moscow by the Irish President who is known for her all-round education, interest in theological issues and commitment to traditional spiritual and moral values.

*DECR Communication Service*