Metropolitan Hilarion himself conducts his ‘Passions According to St. Matthews’ at Khmelnitsky Philharmonic Society

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For the first time since Metropolitan Hilarion of Volokolamsk’s oratorio ‘Passions According St. Matthews’ had been performed, the audience in the Philharmonic Society in Khmelnitsky, Ukraine, saw the author himself at the conductor’s stand in the evening of 23 March 2010. The part of the Evangelist was played by Archbishop Ionafan of Tulchin and Bratslav.

In his introductory remarks before the recital Archbishop Ionafan said that an oratorio in its form echoed the old church tradition of mystery plays, such as ‘Oven Miracle Play’. ‘Their aim was to plunge worshippers into the atmosphere of biblical events. Metropolitan Hilarion’s composition calls us, on the eve of the Holy Week, to set off for a spiritual pilgrimage to the Jerusalem of the time when our Saviour was on earth and to experience the events of His passions on the cross and Resurrection’, the archbishop said.

Present at the concert were bishops, clergy, regional and municipal officials and the delegation accompanying Metropolitan Hilarion on his trip to Ukraine.

The 1100-seat hall could not accommodate all those who wished to listen to the music. The performers got prolonged applause.

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