Metropolitan Hilarion meets with Russian Deputy Foreign Minister A.Yakovenko and Irish Ambassador Philip McDonagh

Russian Deputy Foreign Minister A. Yakovenko and Irish Ambassador in Moscow Philip McDonagh visited the church of Our Lady the Joy to All the Afflict on 14 February 2010 on the invitation of Metropolitan Hilarion of Volokolamsk, chairman of the Moscow Patriarchate department for external church relations.

After the service led by Metropolitan Hilarion, who is rector of this church, the high guests were invited to share the festive repast.

Having greeted those present on the occasion of the Feast of the Meeting of the Lord, which is celebrated this year on the Forgiveness Sunday, His Eminence Hilarion welcomed the guests and told them about the revival of the choral tradition in his church. Mr. Yakovenko thanked the metropolitan for the invitation and warm welcome and noted that the Church and the state had a common task to bear witness to Russian cultural and spiritual traditions. In his response, Metropolitan Hilarion stressed that it was possible only through common efforts and such witness is impossible without the Church. His Excellency Philip McDonagh said that he was delighted to become familiar with the tradition of the Forgiveness Sunday and that the West unfortunately had no such tradition whereby one believes to be guilty towards another and asks for his forgiveness. The ambassador also recalled that his acquaintance with Russia began with the works of Anna Akhmatova and was delighted to learn that she regularly came to the church of Our Lady the Joy to All the Afflicted.

Source: https://mospat.ru/en/news/57711/