



THE RUSSIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH
Department for External Church Relations

Jonah, Archbishop of Washington, Metropolitan of all America and Canada, congratulated DECR Chairman on the occasion of elevation to the rank of Metropolitan

His Eminence HILARION Metropolitan of Volokolamsk

Chairman, Department of External Church Affairs Moscow Patriarchate Danilov Monastery Moscow, Russia

Your Eminence, Metropolitan Hilarion, Christ is in our midst!

On behalf of the Holy Synod of the Orthodox Church in America I heartily congratulate you on the occasion of your elevation to the rank of Metropolitan,

Your work in the External Affairs Department of the Russian Orthodox Church, your Pan-Orthodox involvements and Ecumenical work, will all be enhanced by the higher level of authority that has been invested in you by His Holiness, Patriarch Kyrill. Indeed, we congratulate him as well, that he has such a fine assistant in whom he may put his trust, of which this is a sign.

The world wide work of the Russian Orthodox Church is of critical importance both to the Orthodox Church in America, as well as to the whole Orthodox community. The vision that you and His Holiness embrace, for the development of autocephalous local churches in the so-called "Diaspora", is the key to the future canonical organization of the Church. It is only by implementing this that we will, as the Ecumenical Orthodox Church, be able to manifest a unity in diversity, and preach the fullness of the Gospel free of any cultural or nationalistic agendas. It is by caring for the immigrants from their various countries of origin, which you have been also very vocal to advocate, that stretches the mission of each local Church, and gives it a sense of catholicity, transcending its own cultural and ethnic boundaries. The Ecumenical dialog, especially with the Roman Catholic Church, is given a much higher level of authority by your participation as a Metropolitan.

May the Lord strengthen and encourage you, and give you wisdom and understanding, in the fulfillment of His Holy Will, so that ever with the Father and the Spirit He may be glorified, to all ages.
