



His Holiness Patriarch Kirill of Moscow and All Russia speaks over telephone with the newly elected Patriarch of Serbia

In the evening of 22 January 2010, His Holiness Patriarch Kirill of Moscow and All Russia had a telephone conversation with the newly elected Patriarch Irinej.

His Holiness Kirill warmly greeted Vladyka Irinej and wished him God's help in his high Primatial ministry.

That same evening the Primate of the Russian Orthodox Church sent a congratulatory message to the Patriarch-elect.

According to official report of the Episcopal Council, forty-four archpastors voted at the election, including thirty-four who meet the provisions of the Statute of the Serbian Orthodox Church on the candidates to the Patriarchal throne. They must be ruling hierarchs for no less than five years of ministry. In accordance with the Statute of the Serbian Orthodox Church, Patriarch is elected by lot from among three candidates, each of which should receive over a half of votes.

After the first vote by secret ballot, the Patriarchal *locum tenens* Metropolitan Amphilohije of Crna Gora and Primorje was listed as candidate, Bishop Irinej of Niš after the second voted, and Bishop Irinej of Bačka after the fourth vote.

The candidates' names in sealed envelopes were put into the Book of the Gospels. Archimandrite Gavriil, father-superior of the Lepavine monastery in the Zagreb and Ljubljana diocese took out the envelope with the name of Bishop Irinej of Niš. Members of the Council proclaimed "Many Years!" to the Patriarch-elect who invited his brethren to common work in the field of the Lord.

The enthronement of the forty-fifth Serbian Patriarch is to take place at the Cathedral of the Holy Archangels in Belgrade on January 23.

The solemn enthronement of the new Primate with participation of representatives of the Local Orthodox Churches will be held at the historical Patriarchate of Peć (Kosovo and Metochia). The time will be announced later.

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