



Archbishop Hilarion send congratulatory message to Bishop Irinej of Niš on his election Primate of the Serbian Orthodox Church

Archbishop Hilarion, chairman of the Moscow Patriarchate Department for external church relations, sent the following congratulatory message to Bishop Irinej of Niš on his election to the Serbian Patriarchal Throne.

Your Eminence:

It is with spiritual joy and sincere gratitude to the Lord Jesus Christ that I greet you with your election Primate of the Serbian Orthodox Church.

Having elected you the Primate, the Council of archpastors of the Serbian Church entrusted to your wise guidance the helm of its ship that is to follow the path of salvation among the storms and tribulations of the contemporary world.

The Russian Orthodox Church prayerfully rejoices in this remarkable event. The people for whom our Churches have cared for a long time, always helping each other, have overcome many historical difficulties together. They have been united by the "work of faith and labour of love and steadfastness of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ" (1 Thess 1:3). The relations between the Russian and Serbian Orthodox Churches have been rooted for centuries in fraternal love and like-mindedness. These relations are being actively developed today. The two Patriarchates, which cherish "the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace" (Eph 4:3), are bringing a worthy common contribution to cooperation among Orthodox Churches, thus strengthening the unity of Orthodoxy together. I would like to express my hope for your forthcoming Primatial labours to turn a new page in the contacts between our Churches.

On this day solemn to your and to the entire Serbian Church, I wholeheartedly wish you good health, success, and God's help in your Primatial ministry.

With respectful love in the Lord,

+ Hilarion,

Archbishop of Volokolamsk

Chairman

Department for External Church Relations

Moscow Patriarchate

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