



Archbishop Hilarion: the Russian Church experienced colossal quantitative growth and qualitative changes under Patriarch Alexy II

Archbishop Hilarion of Volokolamsk, chairman of the Moscow Patriarchate department for external church relations, in his talk with national news anchorman Sergey Brilev, shared his thoughts about the ministry of the late Patriarch Alexy II.

‘Every person, especially one of national scale who occupies such a high post, comes down in history with a positive or a negative sign. Patriarch Alexy was a person who can be described with all the certainty as one who has come down in history with a positive sign, as he has left a profound imprint in the life of the Russian Church,’ the archbishop said, recalling the state in which the Russian Church was when the Patriarch Alexy II ascended the primatial throne: it was a Church weakened by decades of persecution and driven actually into a ghetto. It had been in the very last and even months of Patriarch Pimen’s life that the Russian Orthodox Church had begun to come out from this ghetto. Alexy II’s predecessors, who served at the Soviet time, had to be hermits; they were seen only in churches they served in. They could not even visit the dioceses.

‘Patriarch Alexy traveled all over Russia and visited all the parts of the Russian Church. He also made a great deal of visits to other Churches. Under him the Church grew many times over; parishes, monasteries, theological schools multiplied many times’, the DECR chairman stressed.

‘There was a colossal quantitative growth of the Church and tremendous qualitative changes in her life. In that hard period of our history, the Russian Orthodox Church preserved her unity in spite of the fact that there were many forces which wanted to destroy this unity’, he said.

His Eminence Hilarion singled out among the last great achievements of the late Patriarch Alexy II the reunification of the Russian Church Outside Russian with the Moscow Patriarchate in 2007, saying, ‘It was the crown of all the efforts for unity His Holiness Alexy II exerted’.

DECR Communication Service