



Archbishop Hilarion's 'St. Matthew Passions' oratorio performed in Kiev in honour of Metropolitan Vladimir's birthday

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His Beatitude Metropolitan Vladimir of Kiev and All Ukraine's birthday was marked on 23 November 2009 with a grand concert given at the National Philharmonic Society in Kiev.

Present at the concert were Metropolitan Vladimir, bishops of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church, Archbishop Hilarion of Volokolamsk, chairman of the Moscow Patriarchate department for external church relations, Archbishop Seraphim of Ottawa and Canada, head of the Orthodox Church in America's Office of External Affairs and Interchurch Relations, as well as Ukrainian Verkhovna Rada Speaker V. Litvin and head of the Ukrainian Committee for Nationalities and Religions Yu. Reshetnikov.

Before the concert, congratulatory messages to Metropolitan Vladimir were brought from Ukrainian President V. Yushchenko and Prime Minister Yu. Timoshenko.

Archbishop Hilarion spoke next, extending congratulations to the metropolitan on behalf of Patriarch Kirill of Moscow and All Russia and himself. He also said that the best musical teams in Kiev prepared as a gift to Metropolitan Vladimir for the occasion a composition devoted to the Passions of Christ. 'In this music I wanted to express the feelings that an Orthodox Christian experiences worshiping during the Passion Week'.

The oratorio composed by Archbishop Hilarion in 2006 was performed on many occasions in various cities in the world. This time in Kiev it was performed by the Symphonic Orchestra of the Ukrainian National Philharmonic Society conducted by Ukrainian People's Artist Yevgen Savchuk.

After the recital the public gave the author and performers a great ovation.

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