



## **President Dmitry Medvedev wishes many happy returns of the day to Patriarch Kirill**

Russian President Dmitry Medvedev and his wife Svetlana visited the patriarchal working residence in Chisty Pereulok on November 20, 2009.

Offering congratulations on his birthday to the Primate of the Russian Orthodox Church, the head of the Russian state said he was delighted to pay his respect to His Holiness personally and wished him good health and spiritual strength in carrying out his primatial ministry.

Mr. Medvedev presented His Holiness Kirill with a painting depicting the Novo-Ierusalim Monastery of the Resurrection.

His Holiness Kirill thanked the president for the congratulations, saying, 'I am grateful to you for the opportunity to see you on this day. In the Church, we are not very much accustomed to celebrate one's birthday, but in the civil practice it is an ordinary thing. And I am glad that I have an opportunity to see you as the first among civil persons to come'.

His Holiness Kirill also noted that a high level of church-state relations was reached in recent years in Russia.