Patriarch Kirill extends condolences to the family of Father Daniel Sysoev and to the parishioners of St. Thomas's in Moscow

His Holiness Patriarch Kirill of Moscow and All Russia expressed condolences over the tragic death of Father Daniel Sysoev, rector of St Thomas's Church, who was killed on the night of November 19, 2009, by an unknown criminal. Given below is the text of the message of condolences.

To Yulia Sysoeva, family and friends

and to the clergy and parishioners of St. Thomas's:

Please accept my sincere condolences over the death of Father Daniel Sysoev who was killed by a villain in a church of God.

Father Daniel was well known to Orthodox Christians not only in the capital city but also in many other dioceses. By his hard work to preach the word of God, his efforts to bring people to the faith of Christ, his care of the spiritual needs of young people he gained respect of his fellow-pastors and public leaders.

At the same time, his firm missionary stand and inspiring, vivid and emotional image left an imprint in the consciousness of those who sought a way to the church and were impressed by the profundity of his faith and trust in the Lord.

The Lord called His faithful servant to Himself, granting him an opportunity to become a confessor of faith and martyr for the cause of preaching the gospel.

I hope that our Lord Jesus Christ the Conqueror of Death will bring the soul of his faithful servant to the dwellings of the righteous and reckon him among *thousands of angels in joyful assembly and the church of the firstborn, whose names are written in heaven... the spirits of righteous men made perfect* (Heb. 12:23).

I pray to the Lord of the World that he may strengthen the hearts of the family, friends and spiritual children of the dead pastor and give them strength and courage in the ordeal that befallen them.

May eternal memory be to the late Father Daniel.

+ Kirill

Patriarch of Moscow and All Russia

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