DECR chairman meets with representatives of several Protestant communities in various regions in Russia

[gallery order="DESC" columns="2"]

Archbishop Hilarion of Volokolamsk received on October 5 in DECR a group of ministers from several Protestant churches and communities in various regions in Russia. There were some sixty representatives of the Union of the Christians of Evangelical Faith in Russia, the Union of the Evangelical Christians-Baptists in Russia, the Church of the Seventh-Day Adventists and Presbyterian communities.

Responding to the request of the Protestant side to speak about the doctrine and life of the Orthodox Church, Archbishop Hilarion explained the fundamental themes of the Orthodox theology, namely, Christology, Holy Scriptures, the Holy Tradition, Eucharist, sacraments, ecclesiastical hierarchy, veneration of the Mother of God and saints, and the veneration of icons. His Eminence dwelt on the theme of the work of the Holy Spirit in the Church, citing as its recent example the feat of Russia's new martyrs and confessors.

After these remarks Archbishop Hilarion answered numerous questions from his guests. They were interested both in practical aspects of the Russian Orthodox Church's relations with the non-Orthodox and theological issues involved in them. Asked about the Orthodox view of the notion of church, DECR chairman stressed that in the Orthodox perspective churches in the full sense of this term are Local Orthodox Churches. However, it is admissible to use the term 'church' in dialogue with non-Orthodox communities as a sign of respect for their self-designation. At the same time it should be taken into account that some non-Orthodox churches, such as the Roman Catholic Church uphold the apostolic succession of ordinations.

Speaking about inter-Christian relations in Russia, Archbishop Hilarion pointed to the commitment of most of the Christian confessions in Russia to the traditional view of moral Christian values and called for cooperation in the discussion with the secular society. However, DECR chairman said, an indispensable condition for successful inter-confessional dialogue lies in the absence of proselytism.

The Protestant participants in the meeting warmly thanked His Eminence Hilarion for an honest, frank and benevolent talk.

Participating in the meeting were also Archpriest Igor Vyzhanov, DECR secretary for inter-Christian

relations, and Ms. S. Romanchenko, DECR staff member.

Source: https://mospat.ru/en/news/58449/