Metropolitan Hilarion of Volokolamsk receives National Award of the Russian Federation



On June 12, 2012, the Day of Russia, a solemn ceremony of presenting Gold Medals of the Hero of Labour of the Russian Federation and the 2020 National Awards in the field of science and technology, literature and art and for achievements in the human rights advocacy and charitable works took place at the St. George Hall of the Grand Kremlin Palace.

Metropolitan Hilarion of Volokolamsk, head of the Department for External Church Relations of the Moscow Patriarchate and rector of Cyril and Methodius Institute of Post-Graduate Studies, received the Russian Federation National Award in the field of literature and art. The decree signed by the President of the Russian Federation on June 9 states that the award is given for the contribution to the development Russian culture and for educational work.

Addressing the assembly, President Vladimir Putin greeted all the citizens of the country on the occasion of the Day of Russia, saying, “This festive day symbolizes not only today’s development of the Motherland, but also the whole centuries-long uninterrupted path, the magnificence of her history, her achievements and her accomplishments. This great legacy has been created by many generations of our ancestors. Their working and military feats and boundless devotion to the Motherland inspire respect and desire to be worthy of their heroic lives, to preserve and assert in our life the values we have inherited, which today, too, have

an immense importance for all our progress. We can see it in the achievements of today's scientists, cultural workers, active participants in social life, high-level professionals who share sincere love for their work and wish to be helpful to their Motherland. The acknowledgment of their service for the country and the people is expressed in the Russian highest marks of distinction and awards, and today these distinction marks and awards will be presented to the best of the best".

According to the President of Russia, each of them has made in their creative works an important contribution to the spiritual development of the Russian nation, to the strengthening of moral foundations and social harmony.

Speaking about the merits of the recipients of the awards, Vladimir Putin noted in particular that Metropolitan Hilarion continues the traditions of Russian education combining the service of the Church and creative work: his literary, musical, cinematographic works become an event in the cultural life of the country, and his educational programs on the Russian television have a mega audience, and also in the whole world.

In his speech after the presentation of the National Award, His Eminence Hilarion said:

"Highly Esteemed Vladimir Vladimirovich, dear friends,

On this solemn day, my heart is overfilled with the feeling of gratitude. Above all, I thank God Who destined me to live at this time and in this country and called me, when I was fifteen, to the service of the Church, and for forty years now I am carrying out this service. And for me the Church is a daily and primary inspiration.

I would like to thank my mother for having raised me in the Orthodox faith, for having opened for me the great world of the Russian culture, for continuing to take care of me and pray. Thank you, me dear mother, for everything.

I would like today to thank His Holiness Patriarch Kirill. Your Holiness, over a quarter century ago you called me to join your team. I am happy to be your assistant. I am happy to help you in building the Church and protecting her sacred boundaries.

I would like to thank you from my heart, Highly Esteemed Vladimir Vladimirovich and the present leadership of the Russian Federation for the unique conditions the Church has today for education work.

I came to the Church in the years when she was separated by solid walls from society, from the worlds of culture, from school. Gradually these walls are breaking down. And recently, with your help we have broken down another wall between traditional confessions and universities by asserting the right to teach theology in secular higher-education schools.

I thank you for the high assessment of my work. I assure you that I will continue exerting every effort to serve the Church and the Motherland".

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