Constantinople’s attempt to introduce papal power in the Orthodox Church has led to a schism of world Orthodoxy



The ever more insistent statements made by representatives of the Patriarchate of Constantinople on a radical “rapprochement” between the Orthodox Church and the Catholic Church, on a possibility for their forthcoming unification make it necessary to pay special attention to the content of the Orthodox-Catholic dialogue held in the last decades and to issues that divide the Orthodox and Catholics.

Touching upon this topic on the air of the Church and the World program, chairman of the Department for External Church Relations of the Moscow Patriarchate Metropolitan Hilarion of Volokolamsk, mentioned, among other issues of the dogmatic nature, the issues of the procession of the Holy Spirit and the veneration of the Most Holy Mother of God “Who is venerated in the both traditions but differently.

As His Eminence noted, the principal dividing issue is the authority of the Pope in the Church: “We cannot accept such a model of church order as to have one man who is considered to be infallible, who will have power over all the church Councils. We speak of the Church as Catholic and Apostolic. Under catholicity we understand what in the secular language could be called the collective consciousness of the Church: in our Local Churches, the Patriarch is accountable to the Bishops’ Council, rather than the Bishops’ Council is accountable to the Patriarch”.

There are many other dividing points that have accumulated for almost a millennium-long history of the

separate existence of the Orthodox and Catholics, the DECR chairman underlined.

“It is necessary to make a rational assessment of the differences, and we are ready to discuss them within the Orthodox-Catholic dialogue, but not a dialogue that is actually turned into manipulation”, Metropolitan Hilarion said stating, “What Constantinople was engaged in the Orthodox-Catholic dialogue in the last years was an attempt to manipulate Local Orthodox Churches with the aim to recognize the model in which the Patriarch of Constantinople would receive some exclusive powers”.

“From my point of view, the policy pursued by Constantinople in this dialogue was not aimed to achieve unification of the Orthodox and Catholics but by borrowing the Catholic model to create the same model in the Orthodox Church”, he stressed, “in other words, to make us agree to the appearance of a certain infallible ‘Pope’ who would make unilateral decisions with all of us having to obey him. In our Orthodox Church, there has never been anything like this, thank God, and I believe will never be”.

As Metropolitan Hilarion pointed out, “This misshapen attempt of Constantinople to introduce the papal power in the Orthodox Church has already led to a schism in the world Orthodoxy”.

DECR Communication Service

Source: https://mospat.ru/en/news/87531/