Metropolitan Hilarion: The most important task of the Church is to consolidate our unity



Metropolitan Hilarion answered questions put by Yekaterina Gracheva, host of “The Church and the World” TV programme, and called the anticanonical and brigand actions of Patriarch Bartholomew of Constantinople, which have split the world Orthodoxy, the key challenge in the sphere of external activities of the Russian Orthodox Church.

The chairman of the Moscow Patriarchate’s Department for External Church Relations underscored: “The developments we faced in 2018 have split the whole Orthodox Church. This schism is exacerbating because of the Patriarch of Constantinople’s actions.”

“This is a great tragedy, but, as I have said many times, this schism is developing outside of our Church. We deplore it and we pray for Patriarch Bartholomew and other hierarchs who have lapsed into schism or supported it. We thank God for that schism has not affected our Church.

“Our bishops in Russia, Ukraine, Belarus, Moldova, and other countries in our canonical space and beyond it hold the same views and stand in full solidarity. During all these years our Church has lost no part of its canonical territory and none of our church buildings except those on which the Ukrainian schismatics had laid their violent hands, but even in those places we have built many new church buildings.”

Besides, the DECR chairman added, in 2019 there was restored the unity with the Archdiocese of Parishes of the Russian Tradition in Western Europe that were in the Patriarchate of Constantinople's jurisdiction for a long time.

The Metropolitan is convinced that "the main church-wide task is to consolidate our unity." He underscored that the most important responsibility of the Department he heads is to guard the sacred borders of the Russian Orthodox Church and to prevent any possible encroachment on its heritage that has been forming over centuries.

"What is going on outside our Church will weight on the conscience of people committing anticanonical actions. They have already disgraced themselves by these actions here and, most certainly, will account for them in the future life," said Metropolitan Hilarion of Volokolamsk.

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