Metropolitan Hilarion of Volokolamsk takes part remotely in a conference of patristic scholars in Vienna



On September 16-18, an international conference of patristic scholars took place in Vienna, Austria, devoted to exploring the topic of inherited sinfulness in the works of eastern and western Church Fathers. The conference was attended by leading patrologists from various countries.

In the evening of September 16, Metropolitan Hilarion of Volokolamsk addressed the participants remotely, making a special mention of the presence in the hall of Archbishop of Vienna Cardinal Christoph Schoenborn, with whom the DECR chairman is bonded by long years of cooperation, which began as far back as the time when he was Bishop of Vienna and Austria. Metropolitan Hilarion also warmly greeted Prof Teresa Heinthaler of the University of Tubingen, one of the chief organizers of the conference.

In his speech, Metropolitan Hilarion stressed that the study of the heritage of Holy Father cannot be reduced only to the study of their already written texts. It is very important to study the context in which

they did their creative work. And this is impossible without the practical mastering of the foundations of Christian faith and spirituality.

Holy Fathers, as the hierarch noted, were not academic theologians who would sit at a table surrounded by books written by other authors. Their theology was generated primarily from the experience of prayer, as well as the experience of participation in the sacramental life of the Church. Precisely for this reason, their works remain topical for all who seek to find the way to salvation.

As an example of modern study on patristic theology, Metropolitan Hilarion cited the Russian version of the book, which has just come out, by the former Archbishop of Canterbury Rowan Williams entitled Silence and Honey Cakes. The wisdom of the desert devoted to the Egyptian monasticism of the 4th-5th centuries. In the simple and intelligible form the author sets forth the foundations of monastic spirituality seeking to actualize the wisdom of the Egyptian desert, to accentuate its value for the modern reader.

In conclusion of this speech, Metropolitan Hilarion wished success to the attendees and expressed a hope that he will take part in person in one of the future conferences.

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