



**THE RUSSIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH**  
Department for External Church Relations

## **DECR chairman extends greetings to the Patriarch of the Maronite Church on 15th anniversary of his enthronement**



*Metropolitan Anthony of Volokolamsk, chairman of the Department for External Church Relations of the Moscow Patriarchate, sent greetings to His Beatitude Béchara Boutros Cardinal Raï, Maronite Patriarch of Antioch and All the East, on the 15<sup>th</sup> anniversary of his Patriarchal enthronement.*

**His Beatitude Béchara Boutros Cardinal Raï**

**Maronite Patriarch of Antioch and All the East**

Your Beatitude,

Please accept my heartfelt greetings on this memorable date that marks the 15<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the beginning of your Primatial ministry!

Since your youth, you have preserved *faith... in the righteousness of our God and Savior Jesus Christ* (2 Pt 1:1). Having received tonsure and ordination, you devoted your whole self to the church labours. By the Divine Providence, you were entrusted to carry a heavy cross of Patriarchal ministry in times of severe hardships for the ancient Antioch and the entire Middle East. In Your Beatitude, the Maronite Church found a wise and active helmsman who shares his flock's joys and sorrows, strives to ensure their well-being and *lays down his life for the sheep* (Jn 10:11).

In maintaining external church relations, Your Beatitude always devotes attention to promoting good and mutually beneficial cooperation with the Moscow Patriarchate. I would like to express my wish that the traditionally friendly relations between our two Churches may continue their successful development, *bearing fruit in every good work* (Col 1:10).

I wish to Your Beatitude strength in body and spirit, longevity and generous help from God in your Patriarchal service.

Many and good years! With love in the Lord,

**Metropolitan Anthony of Volokolamsk**

**Chairman of the Department for External Church Relations**

**Moscow Patriarchate**