



## **Metropolitan Hilarion attends the blessing of crosses of the new Armenian cathedral in Moscow**

[gallery]

On 23 October 2011, Metropolitan Hilarion of Volokolamsk, chairman of the Moscow Patriarchate's Department for External Church Relations (DECR), attended the blessing and anointing of crosses of the new Armenian Cathedral of the Precious and Life-Giving Cross of the Lord in Moscow at the invitation of Bishop Ezras Nersisyan, head of the New Nakhichevan and Russia diocese of the Armenian Apostolic Church.

The Supreme Patriarch and Catholicos of All Armenians, Karekin II celebrated the blessing together with bishops and clergymen of the Armenian Apostolic Church. Attending the ceremony were Armenian President Serzh Sargsyan, currently on a three-day official visit being paid at the invitation of the Russian President Dmitry Medvedev; representatives of the state of Armenia, of the diplomatic corps, and prominent representatives of Armenian diaspora in Russia.

The blessing of the crosses is a remarkable event for the life of the newly-established parish. The Great Blessing will be celebrated after the completion of painting and decorating.

After the ceremony, Metropolitan Hilarion had short talks with the Primate of the Armenian Apostolic Church and with the President of Armenia. The DECR chairman congratulated them on the end of a construction stage and wished them the soonest completion of painting and decorating. He highly appreciated the level and dynamics of relations between the Russian Orthodox and the Armenian Apostolic Churches and commended the contribution of the Armenian diaspora in the life of contemporary Russian society. He said that the new church would be a centre of spiritual life and unity of the Armenian diocese in Moscow.

Attending the ceremony were archpriest Dimitry Sizonenko, DECR secretary for Inter-Christian relations, and DECR staff members Rev. Alexander Vasyutin and hieromonk Ioann (Guaita).