



Metropolitan Hilarion expresses condolences over death of Father Andre Louf

Don Andre Louf, honorary abbot of the Abbey of Mont des Cats, died on July 12, 2010.

He was born on December 28, 1929, in Leuven, Belgium. Organizing a summer camp for his mates in May 1945, he discovered for himself the Trappist Abbey of Monts des Cats located near the French-Belgian border. Having experienced a call to monastic life, he became a novice in it on October 15, 1947, and took monastic vows on February 2, 1954. On July 19, 1955, he was ordained priest and was soon sent to Rome for studying biblical theology.

On January 10, 1963, when he was 33, he was elected abbot of the monastery and worked for many years to promote the spiritual revival of monasticism in the West. In his books he discussed what is needed in our days for spreading faith. Along with commentaries to the Sunday readings of the Gospel, he wrote about spiritual life, prayer, humbleness, monastic calling and spiritual fatherhood. On November 14, 1997, after 35 years of service, he retired as abbot and began to live as a solitary at the Benedictine Abbey of St. Lioba at Simiane-Collongue in southern France in order to dedicate himself wholly to prayer and reading holy fathers. A few weeks before his death he came back to this own monastery for the reasons of health.

DECR Chairman Metropolitan Hilarion has sent the following message of condolences to the abbot and monastic community of Mont des Cats:

To Father Jacque Delsalle, abbot of the Abbey of Mont des Cats, France

Very Reverend Father,

With profound spiritual trepidity I took the news about the death of Father Andre Louf. Being an

outstanding representative of the monastic tradition in the West, he remained all his lifetime a real friend of Orthodoxy; he knew it well and loved it profoundly. His spiritual life was filled with love of Holy Scriptures and the teaching of Church Fathers which he handed down to his contemporaries. For 35 years he was abbot of Mont des Cats and a spiritual father who cultivated several generations of monks. Thanks to his numerous books and talks, he was also a spiritual guide for many people living in various countries. He did much to reveal the spiritual treasures of monastic tradition in the West after Vatican II. For a wide range of readers, his books became a manual of spiritual life, an instruction in prayer and a reflection on the Word of God.

It can be stated that Father Andre Louf, because of his spiritual influence on the 22 century Western Christianity, was one of the pillars of modern monasticism. I cherish the bright memory of our acquaintance and spiritual friendship.

Together with you I lift up thanks to the Lord for this outstanding witness of the Spirit who lived in our days. I assure you of my prayers and fraternal love in Christ who has conquered death.

+ Hilarion

Metropolitan of Volokolamsk

Chairman

Department for External Church Relations

Moscow Patriarchate