

## Metropolitan Hilarion doesn't consider Moscow "the third Rome"



Head of the Department for External Church Relations of the Moscow Patriarchate Metropolitan Hilarion believes that old concept "Moscow is the third Rome" is outdated and cannot be referred to present-day Moscow.

"I don't think that today we can use concepts that were formulated many centuries ago, they reflected a certain historical reality, but can hardly be applied to current reality," Metropolitan Hilarion said on air *Church and the World* program on Rossiya-24 TV.

He explained that absolute majority of Russians today are not enchurched people and the Church is facing "a great missionary task" – to enchurch people who consider themselves Orthodox Christians, but in fact, are far from being such.

"I think that it is much more important task than any talks about the "third Rome" and the role of Moscow as the the center of Christianity," Metropolitan Hilarion said.

However, according to him, everyone who comes to Moscow and in Russia notes that Russia is a country with very deep Christian roots.

“And for us Christianity is not a phenomenon of the past, it is a phenomenon of the present and the basis for the future,” the hierarch said, “if we enter the Cathedral of Christ the Savior or any other Orthodox church on a great feast, we’ll see how many people come to the service! Anyway, it is not a reason for triumphalism and creating geopolitical theories which can collapse like a house of cards when the wind blows on a certain way.”

Concept “Moscow is the third Rome” appeared after the fall of Constantinople in period when the Moscow principality was raising, it laid a foundation for Messianic ideas about Russia’s role and meaning in that time. The most authoritative and popular was the version that the concept of the third Rome was clearly worded in 1523-1524 by elder Philotheus from Pskov Eleazar Monastery in a formula: “Two Romes fell, a third stands, and there will not be a fourth one.”

– Source: [Interfax](#)