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Metropolitan Hilarion arrives in Pyongyang



On 24 November 2018, Metropolitan Hilarion of Volokolamsk arrived in Pyongyang. Meeting the head of the Moscow Patriarchate's Department for External Church Relations at the airport in the capital of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea were Mr. Vitaly Kim Ji Son, chairman of the DPRK Orthodox Committee; Mr. Alexander Matsegora, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Russian Federation to the DPRK; Rev. Theodor Kim, rector of the Holy Trinity Church in Pyongyang; as well as diplomats of Russia's Embassy in Pyongyang and clerics of the local church. The delegation that accompanied Metropolitan Hilarion included Archbishop Sergy of Solnechnogorsk, administrator of the Moscow Patriarchate's parishes in the countries of East and Southeast Asia; Mr. Dmitry Petrovsky, DECR staff member; Mr. Vyacheslav Lee, subdeacon to the DECR chairman; and Mr. N Sokolov, subdeacon to Archbishop Sergy of Solnechnogorsk.

In the evening of the same day the All-Night Vigil was celebrated at the Holy Trinity Church in Pyongyang. Officiating at the service was Archpriest Sergy Yakutov, rector of the Church of the Protecting Veil of the Mother of God in Ussuriysk, Russia. Among those who prayed at the All-Night Vigil were Metropolitan Hilarion of Volokolamsk, Archbishop Sergy of Solnechnogorsk and other members of the

delegation of the Russian Orthodox Church.

Greeting all the worshippers, Metropolitan Hilarion said, in particular:

“Vladyka Sergy and I are very pleased to visit this magnificent church, to pray with you and, despite chill air, feel the warmth of your hearts and the fire of your prayer.

“Tomorrow we will celebrate the Divine Liturgy in this holy church and will partake of the Holy Mysteries of Christ – the Most Holy Body and Precious Blood of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. I would like to wish us all that the grace of God may always abide with us, that the Lord may enlighten us with His Heavenly Light, and that we may pass the salvific Orthodox faith to our children and to all our relatives and friends.”

Mr. Alexander Matsegora, head of the Russian diplomatic mission, warmly greeted the DECR chairman on behalf of all compatriots and Orthodox Christians in Pyongyang.

Later that night, at the Moranbong residence, a reception was given in honour of the delegation of the Russian Orthodox Church by the DPRK Orthodox Committee.

The DECR chairman conveyed to all those present greetings from His Holiness Patriarch Kirill of Moscow and All Russia, who in 2006 consecrated the Holy Trinity Church in Pyongyang. “The Primate of the Russian Orthodox Church cherishes warm memories of his visit to North Korea,” Vladyka Hilarion said. “The construction of this church was a remarkable project within the framework of the Russian-Korean cooperation. It is gratifying that the Korean priests serve in this church. And it is gratifying to see the Russian Ambassador with his spouse and numerous representatives of the diplomatic corps among the parishioners. It is a remarkable example of cooperation between our countries, as well as of church-state interaction. I am glad that the 70th anniversary of the establishment of the diplomatic relations between the two countries has given me an opportunity to visit North Korea and pray in the Trinity Church,” Metropolitan Hilarion added in conclusion.

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