

RETIRED METROPOLITAN PHILARET OF MINSK REPOSES IN THE LORD



His Eminence Metropolitan Philaret, the retired Metropolitan of Minsk and Honorary Patriarchal Exarch of All Belarus, reposed in the Lord today at the age of 85, reports Patriarchia.ru.

Met. Philaret served as the Patriarchal Exarch of Belarus from 1989 to 2013, when he retired for health reasons and was awarded the title of Patriarchal Exarch Emeritus.

Met. Philaret was diagnosed with the coronavirus on December 16 and then hospitalized in Minsk.

The time and place of his funeral will be announced later.

May his memory be eternal!

His Eminence was born on March 21, 1935 in Moscow. In 1957, he graduated from the Moscow Theological Seminary and entered the Theological Academy. On April 3, 1959, he was tonsured as a monk of the Trinity-St. Sergius Lavra with the name Philaret in honor St. Philaret the Merciful. He was ordained as a hierodeacon on April 3, 1959.

In 1961, he graduated from the Academy as a Candidate of Theology for his dissertation on "The Pastoral Care of Philaret, Metropolitan of Moscow, According to His Letters." He took up a teaching position at the Academy, and on December 14 of that year, he was ordained as a hieromonk. He was then appointed Inspector of the Moscow Theological Academy. In 1963, he was elevated to the rank of igumen and then archimandrite, and beginning in September of that year, he was in charge of the Academy's post-graduate school.

He was then elected and subsequently consecrated as the Bishop of Tikhvin, Vicar of the Leningrad Diocese on October 24, 1965. On May 14, 1966, he was appointed Bishop of Dmitrov, Vicar of the Moscow Diocese, and Rector of the Moscow Theological Academy. In 1968, he was appointed Second Deputy Chairman of the Department for External Church Relations. He later also served on the commission for the glorification of St. Nicholas of Japan and as interim administrator of the Kalinin Diocese.

On September 9, 1971, he was elevated to the rank of Archbishop. On April 18, 1973, he was appointed Archbishop of Berlin and Central Europe. On April 15, 1975, he was elevated to the rank of Metropolitan. On October 10, 1978, he was appointed Metropolitan of Minsk and All Belarus, and on October 12—Patriarchal Exarch of Western Europe.

In 1981, he was appointed Chairman of the Department for External Church Relations and a permanent member of the Holy Synod. He was also appointed to the commission tasked with preparing for the millennial celebration of the Baptism of Rus' in 1988.

On October 16, 1989, he was appointed Exarch of Belarus with the title "Metropolitan of Minsk and Grodno, Patriarchal Exarch of Belarus."

During his years as Exarch of Belarus, he also held several other positions in various Synodal Commissions and social organizations and served as temporary administrator of various dioceses within Belarus.

On December 25, 2013, the Holy Synod of the Russian Church granted him retirement for health reasons and awarded him the title of Patriarchal Exarch Emeritus. He retained the right to participate in the work of the Synod of the Belarusian Exarchate and was given an honorary place at the Divine services and official ceremonies.

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