



## **Metropolitan Hilarion meets with the newly appointed Ambassador of Italy to the Russia**

[gallery]

On 25 January 2011, Metropolitan Hilarion of Volokolamsk, head of the Moscow Patriarchate's Department for External Church Relations (DECR), met with the newly appointed Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Italian Republic to the Russian Federation, H.E. Antonio Dzanardi Landi. They were joined in the meeting that took place at the DECR premises were Rev. Sergiy Zvonarev, secretary for far abroad countries, deacon Aleksiy Dikarev, a DECR staff member for Inter-Christian relations; and M. Palacio, a staff member of the DECR secretariat for far abroad countries.

The Italian Ambassador thanked Metropolitan Hilarion for receiving him and recalled their meeting in Rome last year during the DECR chairman's visit to Italy.

Metropolitan Hilarion and Ambassador Landi discussed problems of upholding traditional Christian values in Europe. The Italian Ambassador expressed his concern over the ruling of the European Court of Human Rights against the use of crucifixes in classrooms in Italy. Metropolitan Hilarion reminded him that Russia intervened as a third party when the case was referred to the Grand Chamber.

Also discussed were prospects of cooperation between the DECR and the Italian diplomatic mission in Moscow, for instance, in arranging cultural events.

In the end of the meeting, Metropolitan Hilarion and Ambassador Landi exchanged presents.

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