



## **Metropolitan Hilarion officiates at celebration of 30th anniversary of episcopal consecration of Archbishop Mark of Berlin and Germany**

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On 30 November 2010, the 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary of episcopal consecration of Archbishop Mark of Berlin, Germany and Great Britain was celebrated at the Cathedral of St. Nicholas and the New Martyrs and Confessors of Russia in Munich. Metropolitan Hilarion of Volokolamsk, head of the Moscow Patriarchate's Department for External Church Relations, officiates at the Divine Liturgy with the blessing of His Holiness Patriarch Kirill of Moscow and All Russia. Concelebrating were the first hierarch of the Russian Orthodox Church Outside of Russia (ROCOR), Metropolitan Hilarion of Eastern America and New York; Archbishop Mark of Berlin, Germany and Great Britain (ROCOR); Archbishop Feofan of Berlin and Germany; Bishop Agapit of Stuttgart (ROCOR); Bishop Sofian of Brasov (Romanian Orthodox Church), and some thirty cleric of the Russia and other Local Orthodox Churches.

Metropolitan Hilarion elevated hierodeacon Isaiah (Slanniki), currently studying in Germany, to the rank of hegumen at the request of His Beatitude Metropolitan Christopher of the Czech Lands and Slovakia.

After the dismissal of the Divine Liturgy, Metropolitan Hilarion greeted the worshippers, saying:

"Your Eminence, dear Metropolitan Hilarion! Your Eminence, dear Archbishop Mark! Your Eminences and Graces, father, brothers, and sisters!

We have celebrated the Divine Liturgy, praying together for our brother, His Eminence Archbishop Mark, who celebrates the 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary of his episcopal consecration today.

"I have arrived in this city to congratulate you, dear Archbishop Mark, on behalf of His Holiness Patriarch Kirill of Moscow and All Russia, who asked me to convey his best sincere feeling and most warm good wishes to you on this remarkable day. He wishes you many and blessed years to work for the good of the Holy Russian Orthodox Church to which you are devoting your entire strength and power.

"I would like to add my humble words to His Holiness' greetings. You have become an Orthodox at the time when it was difficult to think of spiritual revival we are witnessing today, being its participants. Your

have come to the church when the Russian Orthodox Church Outside of Russia was a church in exile and there were no living contacts between the Church in diaspora and the Church in the Fatherland. The archpastors who participated in your episcopal consecration had not lived to see our concelebration of the Divine Liturgy at which we partake from one chalice and offer prayers to God with one heart and one mouth. The Lord has vouchsafed you to be not only a witness, but also a participant of these events.

"You have begun a dialogue with your brother, His Eminence Archbishop Feofan, in the 1990s. There was no communion between the Church in the Fatherland and the Church in diaspora, but you were outlining the ways of cooperation, mutual aid and support. Later, as the process of negotiations between the Moscow Patriarchate and the Russian Orthodox Church Outside of Russia began, you participated in it, and largely thanks to your labours, the blessed events took place. It has allowed us to partake from one chalice and celebrate at one altar.

"Dear Vladyka! Today, as we were listening to the readings from the Apostle and from the Gospel, I was thinking of your life, of how your life and ministry conform to the commandments of Jesus Christ and the apostles. St. Paul says that the Lord gives to each varieties of gifts: to one is given faith, to another gifts of healing, to another various kinds of tongues, to another the interpretation of tongues (cf. 1 Cor 12:4-10). You, dear Vladyka, have many gifts. It was your firm faith that has helped you to hold high the light of the Orthodox faith in non-Orthodox land for many decades and to preach 'the kingdom of God that has come with power' (Mk 9:1) to those near and those far, being a witness of the truth of Orthodoxy before the non-Orthodox Christians. Thanks to your profound knowledge, including foreign languages, you have recently made an important contribution into cooperation among the Orthodox by taking part, together with me, in the inter-Orthodox process aimed at the ordering common life of the Local Orthodox Churches. The Lord has given you a gift of various kinds of tongues and the interpretation of tongues. You speak Russian much better than many Russians. You speak other languages, and this helps your contacts with a wide circle of people. When you come to Russia, you are not received as a foreigner, but as one of our own, as you have imbibed Russian culture and spiritually and have become their authentic bearer.

"While celebrating with you at the church to which you have devoted several decades of your work, celebrating with your brothers bishops and your flock, I would like to wish you physical and moral strength from the Lord and His help in your great and responsible ministry. I wish you God's help in being a good shepherd who calls his own sheep by name, and the sheep follow him (cf. Jn 10:2-4). These words from today's reading from the Gospel directly concern you as a bishop of the Church of God and a shepherd of your little flock.

"I wish you God's help. May the Lord always make you strong and the Most Holy Mother of God be your helper and heavenly intercessor. May the Lord, through the prayers of the new martyrs and confessors

of Russia, whom you venerate, give you strength for your noble and responsible ministry for the good of the Russian Orthodox Church and worldwide Orthodoxy."

The chairman of the Moscow Patriarchate's Department for External Church Relations presented Archbishop Mark with a *panagia*.

Archbishop Mark of Berlin, Germany and Great Britain thanked all those gathered at the church and prayed together with him.

Addressing Metropolitan Hilarion of Volokolamsk, he said: Your Eminence, I ask you to convey my best regards to His Holiness the Patriarch and my gratitude for sending you here to officiate at the divine service, thus representing him. It is a great privilege to me, and I am very grateful for it."

The divine service was followed by a repast for the bishops and clerics who took part in it, as well as for the monks, nuns, and laymen who came to Munich to greet Archbishop Mark with the 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary of his episcopal ministry.

That same day Metropolitan Hilarion of Volokolamsk departed for Moscow.

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