



DECR chairman performs the rite of accepting back into the Orthodox Church those who have temporarily fallen away from it

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On April 3, 2010, the Great Saturday, Metropolitan Hilarion of Volokolamsk, head of the Moscow Patriarchate's department for external church relations, performed the rite of accepting back into the Orthodox Church those who have temporarily fallen away from it, at the church of Our Lady the Joy to All the Afflicted in Moscow.

According to tradition, this rite is performed before the Divine Liturgy, so that those who come back to the Church may participate in the Eucharist and partake of the Holy Gifts of Christ.

His Eminence addressed himself to the congregation with an archpastoral homily, saying,

I wholeheartedly congratulate you, Brother and Sisters, on your reunification with the Holy Church. You all have been baptized and anointed and then it happened so that due to some circumstances, through your own fault or under the influence of other people, you diverted into various wrong beliefs or sects.

Today the Lord has brought you back to the Church. In this connection I recall our Saviour's words: 'I tell you that in the same way there will be more rejoicing in heaven over one sinner who repents than over ninety-nine righteous persons who do not need to repent' (Lk. 15:7). Today there is rejoicing in heaven about your coming back to the fold of the Holy Church. From now on you can without hindrance come to the Church's Sacraments – confession, communion, and through these Sacraments be cleansed of sins and go from strength to strength and unite with Christ spiritually and bodily in partaking of the Holy and Life-giving Sacraments.

Remember that today there are many false teachers of all kinds who teach deceptive dogmata and wrong things about God and the Holy Church. If among your friends there are those who have gone astray and got lost, help them. You have found strength to come back. The Lord has brought you to the Church not only for you to enjoy now the knowledge of truth and communion with God but also to bring back with you other people who were like you earlier, who diverted into some false teachings, schisms or sects.

May God give you to be good Orthodox Christians and to forget as soon as possible the things false

teachers have taught you. May He give you to drive away from your hearts all things wrong and false they have taught you. Be faithful sons and daughters of the Church of Christ. Believe all that she teaches you. The Church of Christ has existed on earth for two thousand years and never deceived or offended anybody. And may God make you life in the Church grace-giving, so that every day you may go from strength to strength on your journey to the Heavenly Kingdom.

DECR Communication Service

Source: <https://mospat.ru/en/news/57463/>