



## Metropolitan Hilarion addresses thousands on Poklonnaya Hill

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On 9 May 2012, the Victory Day, the Mariinsky Theatre Symphony Orchestra conducted by Valery Gergiev gave a concert on Poklonnaya Hill. Thousands of Muscovites and guests of the capital city, including the veterans of the Great Patriotic War, attended the event that completed the 11<sup>th</sup> Moscow Easter Festival.

Metropolitan Hilarion of Volokolamsk, chairman of the Moscow Patriarchate's Department for External Church Relations, addressed the audience before the concert, saying:

"Dear brothers and sisters!

"I congratulate you on the Victory Day, the celebration of joy, though with tears, that no one will ever take away from us.

"There were many great victories in the history of our great multinational Fatherland. No matter how mighty were enemies who encroached upon our sacred shrines, our independence and our well-being, they always fled with disgrace, be they the Teutonic knights, or powerful Napoleon who conquered a half of Europe, or Hitlerite hordes.

"Besides our victory in the Great Patriotic War, we shall celebrate the jubilees of other great victories, such as the 200<sup>th</sup> anniversary of our victory in the first Patriotic War and the 400<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the end of the Troubled Times and liberation of Russia from the Poles. We won, but at great cost. We bow to the exploit of people who did not fear death and laid down their lives for their neighbours so that we live today. We bow before the deeds of soldiers who are alive and celebrate the great Victory Day together with us.

"The Church has always been with her people. When the Poles attacked our country, the Church, through the holy Patriarch Hermogen, called the Russians to set up people's volunteer corps. When the Fascist hordes burst into our land, it was on the first day of war that the Church, through Metropolitan Sergius, called the people to rise in defence of the Fatherland.

"Today the Church is with her people as ever. She helps to revive our national life together with other

traditional confession of Russia. Our people have returned to their traditions and restored holy places. This is a pledge of that evil will never prevail and that we shall always win.

“I greet you with the Victory Day! God is with us! Christ is Risen!”

The Mariinsky Theatre Symphony Orchestra performed *Concerto No.2* for piano and orchestra by Sergei Rachmaninov with Denis Matsuev as soloist, *Festive Overture* by Dmitry Shostakovich, *1812 Overture* and parts of the *Nutcracker* Ballet by Petr Ilyich Tchaikovsky.

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