



PONTIFICIUM CONSILIUM
AD CHRISTIANORUM UNITATEM FOVENDAM

E Civitate Vaticana, die 13 January 2021

PROT. N. ...19/2020/e

TO HIS EMINENCE VENIAMIN
Metropolitan of Minsk and Zaslavsk
Patriarchal Exarch of all Belarus

Your Eminence,

It is with profound sadness that I have learned of the passing of your beloved brother in Christ, Metropolitan Philaret (Vakhromeev), Emeritus Patriarchal Exarch of All Belarus.

I would like to express to Your Eminence, to the Synod of Bishops, and to all the Belarusian Orthodox Church my heartfelt condolences together with the assurance of my closeness in prayer. I take this opportunity to offer thanksgiving to God for his many years of faithful service to the Lord, during which time our departed Metropolitan offered all of us a luminous example of faith.

During his longstanding ministry, Metropolitan Philaret contributed notably to the rebirth of ecclesial life, to the renewal and construction of new churches and monasteries, and to the development of religious instruction and educational programmes in the Church of Belarus.

As President of the Department for External Church Affairs of the Moscow Patriarchate, Metropolitan Philaret contributed to deepening reconciliation among Christians of the East and West, and particularly to strengthening fraternal bonds between the Orthodox Church and the Catholic Church by building up a fruitful network of spiritual friendships with many Catholic brethren.

I join in the prayer that Metropolitan Philaret may be granted peace together with the saints in the never-ending joy of God's Kingdom. Eterna memoria!

In renewing the assurance of my prayer, I express the hope that Your Eminence, together with the Orthodox brothers and sisters in Belarus, may be granted every spiritual gift.

With fraternal greetings in the Lord,

Cardinal Kurt Koch
President