

## The Sardinian historian Giovanni Gaita is ordained Deacon



On Palm Sunday, 28 March, the historian Giovanni Gaita was tonsured reader and ordained deacon in Moscow. Born in Sardinia on 26 November 1962 and a graduate of the Universities of Rome and Geneva, he has mostly lived in Russia since 1989 and works there as a lecturer.

Deacon Giovanni has a specialised interest in Armenia and has written three books on the subject, including a book of interviews with the Catholicos Garegin II and one entitled 'A Cry from Ararat'. For the last year he has been working for the External Relations Department of the Russian Church. Last autumn he accompanied Metropolitan Hilarion of Volokolamsk, who ordained him last Sunday, to Rome, where the Metropolitan (then Archbishop) met Pope Benedict XVI.

At the end of the liturgy the Metropolitan was presented with holy relics by a representative of the Knights of Malta, Gianfranco Facco-Bonetti, and the 81 year-old Marquise Immacolata Solaro del Borgo. Among the relics are those of St John the Baptist, the Apostles Peter and Paul, St Boniface the Martyr, St Alexis the Man of God, St Dionysius the Areopagite, St Natalia, fragments of the True Cross and parts of the lash with which Christ was scourged.