



International Conference on spiritual ties of Transcarpathia with Mount Athos takes place in Ukraine

On 6 November 2019, a Conference ‘Transcarpathia and Mt Athos: spiritual and cultural connections’ took place in Uzhgorod, Ukraine.

Taking part in the forum were fifty scholars from nine countries: Ukraine, Hungary, Greece, Moldova, Poland, Russia, Slovakia, Serbia and Czechia. The conference was timed to the 120th anniversary of the birth of hieroschemamonk Avvakum (Vakarov), an elder of Transcarpathia and Mt. Athos.

Greetings from the Primate of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church His Beatitude Metropolitan Onufry of Kiev and All Ukraine, were read out at the opening of the conference. He reminded the participants of the dozens of ethnic Transcarpathians who were spiritual fathers and abbots of the monasteries on Mt. Athos and of many canonized Athonite zealots. Also read out were greetings from His Beatitude Metropolitan Rastislav, Primate of the Orthodox Church of the Czech Lands and Slovakia.

Metropolitan Antony of Borispol and Brovary, chancellor of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church, addressed greetings to the participants and told them that Orthodox monasticism spread in Transcarpathia thanks to the monks from Mt. Athos who called the region ‘a little Athos,’ because many small monasteries and scetes appeared in various parts of Transcarpathia. He added that the monks from the region who went to Mt. Athos ‘saved St. Panteleimon’s monasterty from decline and helped to restore its spiritual ties with the Russian Orthodox Church lost after 1917.’

A book ‘The Athonite Elder from Transcarpathia Hieroschemamonk Avvakum (Vakarov) and his time: 1899-1972’ was presented, and reports of the participants were delivered and followed by discussion, the Union of Orthodox Journalists reports, referring to the International Institute of the Athonite Heritage.