



## **A church in the Russian style to be built in Lebanon**

On 22<sup>nd</sup> September 2019, in the city of Zahle, Lebanon – birthplace of Metropolitan Niphon of Philippiopolis who has been serving as representative of the Patriarch of Antioch to the Patriarch of Moscow and All Russia since 1977, there was laid the first stone of the future Orthodox Church of the “Unexpected Joy” Icon of the Most Holy Theotokos. The building designed in the Russian architectural style will become the fourth Orthodox church in this Lebanese city.

The rite of the blessing of the foundation stone was performed by His Beatitude Patriarch John X of the Great Antioch and All the East together with Metropolitan Hilarion of Volokolamsk, chairman of the Moscow Patriarchate’s Department for External Church Relations, and Metropolitan Niphon of Philippiopolis. They laid a capsule containing a commemorative charter in the foundation of the Church of the “Unexpected Joy” Icon of the Most Holy Theotokos.

Among those attending the celebration were hierarchs of the Patriarchate of Antioch: Metropolitan Antonios of Zahle, Metropolitan Elias of Tyre and Sidon, and Bishop Luke of Seidnaya; as well as Bishop Antonije of Moravica, representative of the Patriarch of Serbia to the Patriarch of Moscow and All Russia; Lebanese public figures and foreign diplomats.

*DECR Communication Service*