



## **Delegation of abbots and abbesses of the Coptic Church visits Orthodox holy places in Moscow and Moscow Region**

From September 12-15, 2019, a delegation of abbots, abbesses and nuns of the Coptic Orthodox Church monasteries and convents, who are on a pilgrimage to Russia at the invitation of Patriarch Kirill of Moscow and All Russia, visited churches in monasteries in Moscow and Moscow Region.

The delegation began their stay in Moscow with a visit to the Patriarchal Convent of the Protecting Veil to venerate the relics of Blessed Matrona of Moscow. They were cordially welcomed by Mother Superior Theophania (Miskina) and the sisters.

On September 13, the guests visited the Moscow representation of the St. Sergius Monastery of the Holy Trinity to meet with the head of the Synodal Department for Monasteries and Monastics, Archbishop Feognost of Kashira. His Eminence warmly greeted the delegation of Egypt stating the importance of continuing such reciprocal visits for a more profound study of the history and today's life and rich experience of the Coptic and Russian monasticism.

On the same day, the delegation visited the Patriarchal Conception Convent to meet with Mother Superior Juliana (Kaleda) and the sisters. A grand reception was given in honour of the guests from Egypt after which the abbess talked to the delegation members with many of whom she had met last year as a member of the Moscow Patriarchate delegation of abbots and abbesses on their visit to Egypt.

Equally warm was the welcome given to the Coptic monks and nuns at the Ss Martha and Mary Convent of Mercy, whose abbess Elizabeth (Posdnyakova) too was on the last year trip of the Russian delegation to old cloisters in Egypt.

On September 14, the guests came to the Convent of Our Lady of Smolensk to meet with the patriarchal vicar of the diocese of Moscow, Metropolitan Juvenaly of Krutitsy and Kolomna, who cordially welcomed them on behalf of Patriarch Kirill of Moscow and All Russia and the Holy Synod, stressing that it was a great joy for him to receive representatives of Egyptian old monastic tradition. 'The Coptic Church', he said, is a guardian of old traditions of Christian devotion, which have never been interrupted'. Bishop Daniel, the head of the delegation, on his part, warmly thanked the metropolitan for the generous reception and asked to convey to the Primate of the Russian Orthodox Church best regards and wishes

from the Coptic Patriarch Tawadros II.

In the evening of that day, the delegation of the Coptic Church was solemnly received by the brethren of the Novospassky Monastery and their father superior, the first vicar of the Patriarch of Moscow and All Russia, Bishop Dionisy of Voskresensk.

On September 15, the guests from Egypt made a tour of monasteries and convents in the Moscow Region. In the Khotkovo Convent of the Protecting Veil, they venerated the holy relics of St. Sergius of Radonezh, a saint known and revered in the Coptic Church. The representatives of Patriarch Tawadros II were warmly welcomed by Bishop Paramon, abbot of the St. Sergius Laura of the Holy Trinity, and Sister Olympiada (Baranova), abbess of the convent in Khotkovo.

When in Moscow, the delegation visited the Cathedral Church of Christ the Saviour, the St. Daniel and the Zaikonospassky Monasteries and made a tour of the historic center of the Russian capital city.

During their stay in the diocese of Moscow, the guests from the Coptic Church were accompanied by Bishop Alexy of Solnechnogorsk, abbot of the St. Daniel Monastery; Sister Elizabeth (Pozdnyakova), abbess of the Ss Martha and Mary Convent; Hieromonk Yermogen (Korchukov), oikonomos of the Zaikonospassky Monastery; Hieromonk Stephan (Igumnov) DECR secretary for inter-Christian relations; S. Aleferov and R. Akhmatkhanov, staff members of the DECR; and representatives of the Coptic community in Moscow.

In the period from September 16-18, the delegation will go to the Diveyevo Convent of the Holy Trinity and other holy places in the Metropolis of Nizhny Novgorod, and after that will depart for Cairo.

*DECR Communication Service*

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