Metropolitan Pavel of Khanty-Mansiysk arrives in the Philippines



On 7th August 2019, Metropolitan Pavel of Khanty-Mansiysk and Surgut, acting administrator of the diocese of the Philippines and Vietnam of the Patriarchal Exarchate of Southeast Asia, arrived in Manila.

Meeting Metropolitan Pavel at the Ninoy Aquino International Airport were Metropolitan Sergy of Singapore and Southeast Asia, Patriarchal Exarch for Southeast Asia; Ms. Tatyana Shlychkova, Minister Counsellor of Russia's Embassy in Manila; Hieromonk Pitirim (Dondenko), secretary of the Exarchate; Hieromonk Philip (Balingit); Hieromonk Alexy (Lapshin), cleric of the Church of the Iveron Icon of the Mother of God in Manila; Mr. D.M. Karenin, second secretary of Russia's Embassy in the Philippines; and Mr. D. Lavrentyev, secretary of the Exarchate.

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Christian communities on Mindanao Island first expressed their interest in the Russian Orthodoxy in

2015.

In 2015-16 the catechization was carried out among the people of the Philippines who wanted to embrace Orthodoxy; the Russian Orthodox Church's clerics celebrated the divine services there; new churches were built; the liturgical and religious texts were translated into the Cebuano and Tagalong languages.

By its decision of 21st October 2016 (minutes No. 99), the Holy Synod of the Russian Orthodox Church appointed Archbishop Sergy of Solnechnogosk the administrator of the Moscow Patriarchate's parishes in the countries of East and Southeast Asia, including in the Republic of the Philippines.

To implement the decision of the supreme church authority, Archbishop Sergy exerted efforts to revive the Iveron parish in Manila and to send a cleric to the capital of the Philippines who would serve there on a permanent basis, as well as to organize the pastoral care for the Orthodox compatriots resident in the Philippine islands, and for the local communities which had converted to Orthodoxy.

An administrative and educational centre was opened in the city of Davao to coordinate the activities aimed at providing pastoral care to members of the Moscow Patriarchate's communities on the Mindanao island, at catechizing the Philippine people who decided to embrace the Orthodox faith, and at preparing candidates for studying at theological schools of the Russian Orthodox Church.

In view of the increasing number of our compatriots resident in Asia and the growth of the Moscow Patriarchate's communities in the Pacific Rim Region, the Holy Synod of the Russian Orthodox Church, by its decision of 28th December 2018 (Minutes No. 106) established the Patriarchal Exarchate of Southeast Asia, which included the Philippines, and by its decision of 26th February 2019 (Minutes No. 8) created the diocese of the Philippines and Vietnam within the Exarchate.

DECR Communication Service

Source: https://mospat.ru/en/news/46186/