Memorial service for Russian sailors who had died in Bosphorus Strait in 1917 was celebrated in Istanbul on Russia's Navy Day

On 28th July 2019, Russia's Navy Day and the Day of the Baptism of Russia, at the residence of the Consulate General of the Russian Federation in Istanbul, Rev. Georgy Sergeyev, acting rector of the Church of Ss. Constantine and Helen in the territory of Russia's Consulate General, who is responsible for taking pastoral care of the Moscow Patriarchate's flock in Turkey, celebrated the memorial service at the burial place of the Russian sailors from the Morzh submarine. The sailors died while conducting a combat mission in the Bosphorus Strait in spring of 1917.

Among those who attended the service were staff members of the Consulate General and representatives of shipping companies in Istanbul.

Fr. Georgy greeted all those present with the Day of the Baptism of Russia and emphasized the importance of the feat of the Russian sailors in defending their homeland.

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The Morzh submarine was launched in the city of Nikolayev on 15th September 1913 and reinforced the Black Sea Fleet on 30th April 1915. Very fast it gained a reputation of one of the best ships – it destroyed and captured a whole flotilla of the enemy's ships: eight tugboats with barges, as well as steamers and a three-masted brig.

On 5th May 1917, the Morzh submarine was sunk by a mine with all hands, 42 crewmen. The bodies of several sailors were buried in the territory of the summer residence of the present-day Consulate General of the Russian Federation in Istanbul. A memorial, constructed at their burial place, was restored in 2016.

The exact place where the submarine had sunk was discovered in 2000 by an international group of explorers searching for the ships sunk in the Black Sea in the 1940s.

On 6th July 2009, after consecrating the Church of Ss. Constantine and Helen, Equal-to-the-Apostles, built in the territory of the Consulate General's residence in Büyükdere, His Holiness Patriarch Kirill of Moscow and All Russia commemorated the Russian sailors from the Morzh submarine.

In spring of 2017 anchors were installed at the memorial to pay tribute to the Russian sailors.

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