



His Holiness Patriarch Kirill of Moscow and All Russia meets with representatives of Orthodox Church of Bulgaria and Albania

On 28 July 2018, His Holiness Patriarch Kirill of Moscow and All Russia met with the delegations of the Bulgarian Orthodox Church and the Orthodox Church of Albania, who participating in the celebration of the 1030th anniversary of the Baptism of Russia along with representatives of other Local Orthodox Church. The meeting took place at the Throne Hall of the Patriarchal Chambers at the Cathedral of Christ the Saviour.

The delegation of the Bulgarian Orthodox Church includes Metropolitan Gavriil of Loveč, Bishop Gerasim of Melnik, chief secretary of the Holy Synod and Archimandrite Teoctist (Dimitrov) representative of the Patriarch of Bulgaria to the Patriarch of Moscow and All Russia. Metropolitan Nikkola of Apolonia and Fieri represented the Orthodox Church of Albania.

Taking part in the meeting were Metropolitan Hilarion of Volokolamsk, chairman of the Moscow Patriarchate's Department for External Church Relations (DECR), Archbishop Sergy of Solnechnogorsk, head of the Moscow Patriarchate's Administrative Secretariat; Archpriest Nikolai Balashov, DECR deputy chairman, and Archpriest Igor Yakimchuk, DECR secretary for inter-Orthodox relations.

"May God help the entire Bulgarian Church which we love and with which we maintain inner spiritual bonds," His Holiness told the delegation from Bulgaria. Metropolitan Gavriil thanked His Holiness for love and invitation to the celebration, adding that all Orthodox people must be united.

His Holiness underscored: It is necessary to overcome all temptation of the schism in Ukraine and elsewhere as we have no right to weaken the one Orthodox Church by fighting one another. This would be a crime, and the future generation will understand us. We must stay together, uphold our unity and be able to divide sheep from the goats.

His Holiness asked the Bulgarian delegates to convey his greeting to His Holiness Patriarch Neofit of Bulgaria.

Metropolitan Nikkola thanked His Holiness Patriarch Kirill for the joy of common celebration of the remarkable 1030th anniversary of the Baptism of Russia, conveyed to him greetings and best wishes from Archbishop Anastasios of Tirana and All Albania and said: "There are not many Orthodox in

Albania, but His Beatitude deemed it necessary to send us to this celebration.”

Representative of the Orthodox Church of Albania also underscored the necessity of the Orthodox unity which is very important and added that His Beatitude Archbishop Anastasios exerted efforts for its upholding.

His Holiness Patriarch Kirill thanked the Albanian hierarch for taking part in the celebration and asked him to convey the expression of brotherly love and gratitude for his position. “I know that he firmly stands on the canonical positions and defends the unity of the Orthodox Church in the world,” His Holiness added.

The Primate of the Russian Orthodox Church presented the delegations with the sets of liturgical vessels for their Churches. The sets were made for the jubilee date of the 1030th anniversary of the Baptism of Russia.

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