



## **Administrator of Moscow Patriarchate parishes in East and South-East Asia begins his trip to Philippines**

June 22, 2018 – the administrator of the Moscow Patriarchate parishes in East and South-East Asia, Archbishop Sergiy of Solnechnogorsk, has arrived in Davao, the administrative center of Mindanao Island in Philippines.

At Francisco Bangoy international airport, he was met by Hieromonk Pitirim (Dondenko), secretary of the administrator of the Moscow Patriarchate in East and South-East Asia and senior priest at the Dormition church in Singapore; Rev. Stanislav Rasputin, permanent priest of the Moscow Patriarchate parish in General Santos city; Hieromonk Corniliy (Molev), permanent cleric of the Parish of the Blessed Matrona of Moscow in Davao; Rev. Siluan Thompson (Russian Orthodox Church Outside Russia), rector of the church of St. John of Shanghai; wardens of the Moscow Patriarchate parishes on Mindanao Island, and staff members of the missionary center at the St. Matrona church.

Archbishop Sergiy visited the St. Matrona church, in which he was welcomed by the Philippian students undergoing training before entering St. Petersburg Theological Academy. The young people greeted His Eminence and presented him with a basket with Philippian fruits.

Later that day, the archpastor celebrated vespers at the St. Matrona church at the Davao missionary center.

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Through the efforts made by an initiative group of priest since 2015, Christian communities in Mindanao, founded in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century by Grigorio Aglipay, began to join the Moscow Patriarchate.

From 2015 to 2016, the work was carried out to catechize the Philipppians who embraced Orthodoxy; the Russian Orthodox clergy celebrated divine services; new churches were built; liturgical and sacred texts were translated into the Sebyano language. Due to a lack of possibility for permanent pastoral care for the parishes by Orthodox priests, missionaries taught wardens to celebrate using the lay order.

The Holy Synod of the Russian Orthodox Church, by its decision of October 21, 2016 (Minutes 99), appointed Archbishop Sergiy of Solnechnogorsk as administrator of the Moscow Patriarchate parishes

in East and South-East Asia including in the Republic of Philippines.

In fulfilling the will of the Supreme Authority, Archbishop Sergiy has worked to revive the Parish of Our Lady of Iveron in Manila, which has functioned since 1934. He has also organized pastoral care for Orthodox compatriots residing in Philippines and for converted local communities.

At present, an administrative and religious education center is being created in Davao for coordination of pastoral care for members of the Moscow Patriarch communities in Mindanao, catechizing those who decided to embrace Orthodoxy and training candidates for studies at theological schools of the Russian Orthodox Church.

*Official website of the Russian Orthodox Church/*

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