



Summer institute for Moscow Patriarchate representatives held in Rome

From May 19 to 26, 2018, the 3d Summer Institute for representatives of the Russian Orthodox Church was held in Rome as part of the academic and cultural cooperation between the Moscow Patriarchate and the Roman Catholic Church. The project was organized by the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity with participation of the Moscow Patriarchate department for external church relations (DECR) and the Ss Cyril and Methodius Institute for Post-Graduate Studies (CMI).

The group of attendees included staff members of the synodal departments of the Moscow Patriarchate and representatives of theological schools and clergy from various dioceses of the Russian Orthodox Church. The group was led by Bishop Arseniy of Yuryev, vicar of the diocese of Novgorod.

The institute's program included visits to common Christian holy places, introduction to the work of higher education institutions of the Roman Catholic Church and meetings with leaders of various institutions of the Curia of Rome, among which was a meeting with the Holy See State Secretary Cardinal Pietro Parolin, which lasted an hour and a half. They also met with Russia's ambassador to the Vatican A. Avdeyev and the former Apostolic Nuncio to Russia, Archbishop Antonio Mennini. Throughout its visit the group was accompanied by the Rev. Hyacinthe Destivelle, a staff member of the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity.

On May 20, the guests from the Russian Orthodox Church visited the St. Clement Basilica, in which they celebrated a thanksgiving at the relics of St. Cyril Equal-to-the-Apostles, the Enlightener of the Slavs, as the next year will mark the 150th anniversary of his demise.

On May 23, the group attended the Papal General Audience in St. Peter's Square. After it they were introduced to Pope Francis. In his brief greeting, the head of the Roman Catholic Church underscored the topicality of inter-Christian dialogue. After that the sides exchanged gifts.

On May 24, the commemoration day of Ss Cyril and Methodius Equal-to-the-Apostles, the Teachers of the Slavs, Bishop Arseniy celebrated the Divine Liturgy at St. Catherine's in Rome. He was assisted by the delegation members in holy orders. After the service, *Many Years of Life* was sung to His Holiness Patriarch Kirill as it was his name day.

The regular Summer Institute in Russia for representatives of the Roman Catholic Church is expected to take place this autumn.

DECR Communication Service

Photos by CMI Press Service

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