Primates of Russian and Albanian Churches celebrate Divine Liturgy at Resurrection Cathedral in Tirana

April 29, 2018 – His Holiness Kirill, Patriarch of Moscow and All Russia, and His Beatitude Anastasios, Archbishop of Tirana and All Albania, celebrated the Divine Liturgy at the Cathedral of the Resurrection in Tirana.

Among their concelebrants were members of the Holy Synod of the Albanian Orthodox Church - Metropolitans Ignatios of Berat, Joan of Corce, Demetrios of **Gjirokaster**, Nicolla of Apollonia, Anthony of Elbasan, and Nathanael of Amantia.

Patriarch Kirill was also assisted by members of the Russian Orthodox Church delegation who accompanied His Holiness during his visit to the Albanian Church - Metropolitan Hilarion of Volokolamsk, chairman of the Moscow Patriarchate department for external church relations (DECR), Archbishop Sergiy of Solnechnogorsk, head of the Moscow Patriarchate administrative secretariat, Archpriest Nikolay Balashov, DECR vice-chairman, Archpriest Igor Yakimchuk, DECR secretary for inter-Orthodox relations, Rev. Anatoly Churyakov, DECR staff member, and Rev. Alexander Volkov, head of the Patriarchal press service.

Present at the liturgy was Russian Ambassador to Albania Mr. A. Karpushin.

Liturgical singing was performed by the Byzantine and European choirs of the Resurrection Cathedral and the Moscow Synodal Choir who came from Russia.

The service was broadcast live by the Albanian State Television Company and the Russian TV channels ‘Spas’ and ‘Soyuz’.

After the liturgy, Archbishop Anastasios addressed Patriarch Kirill with Paschal greetings. Patriarch Kirill spoke in response.

Patriarch Kirill presented Archbishop Anastasios with two pectoral icons, a pectoral cross and an Easter egg painted by Russian icon-painters as a token of the common liturgy and a sign that the visit of the Primate of the Russian Orthodox Church fell on the Easter period, which lasts 40 days. To the cathedral His Holiness gave an icon of the Twelve Apostles.

Archbishop Anastasios presented Patriarch Kirill with an icon of the Ascension painted by an Albanian artist who used as his plot the mosaic of the Cathedral of the Resurrection, and with patriarchal insignia.

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The Cathedral of the Resurrection was built in the period from 2004 to 2012 in the center of Tirana, at a plot provided by the state as a compensation for the previous cathedral destroyed in 1967. It has been designed by Greeks from a New York architectural bureau with an active participation of Archbishop Anastasios.

The cathedral was opened on June 24, 2012, in the presence of the president of the country and the speaker of the parliament. It was consecrated on June 1, 2014, by representatives of thirteen Local Churches. The Moscow Patriarchate was represented by Metropolitan Feodosiy (Rasskazovsky) of Tambov.

DECR Communication Service

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