



Archbishop Feofan of Berlin and Germany passed away to the Lord

September 11, 2017 – Archbishop Feofan of Berlin and German has passed away to the Lord at the age of 64 after a prolonged disease.

Archbishop Feofan's whole life was an example of selfless service of God and the Church. He was born on July 8, 1954, in Belaya Tserkov near Kiev, Ukraine. After graduation from secondary school he studied at Dnepropetrovsk Chemical and Technological Institute.

In 1972 he entered Leningrad Theological Seminary and later the academy, from which he graduated in 1977 with the degree of Candidate of Theology. According to professors, fellow-students and friends the future Archbishop of Berlin was one of the most diligent and gifted students, who sought to grasp theology with special zeal. After graduation from the academy, he was appointed lecturer and assistant inspector of Leningrad Theological Seminary.

On January 4, 1976, he took monastic vows with the name Feofan. On January 7, Metropolitan Nikodim (Rotov) of Leningrad and Novgorod ordained him as hierodeacon and on April 17, 1977, Archbishop Kirill of Vyborg (now Patriarch of Moscow and All Russia) ordained him as hieromonk.

After a three-year training at the Eastern Church Institute in Regensburg (1977-1979) Hieromonk Feofan resumed teaching at Leningrad Theological Schools. In 1980, he was elected secretary of the Council of Leningrad Theological Academy and head of the Chair of Liturgics. All who knew His Eminence noted later his profound knowledge of the church statute, theological disciplines and love of the liturgy. He could speak for hours about particular fine points of the liturgy, making his listeners impressed by the breadth of his knowledge

In January 1985, Hieromonk Feofan was appointed acting inspector and on February 14 he was elevated to the rank of archimandrite and in August occupied the post of inspector. In the same year, he, for a short time, was acting rector of Leningrad Theological Schools.

The year 1985 initiated the period of His Eminence's service in the field of external church relations. By the Holy Synod decision of February 7, 1986, he was appointed deputy head of the Department for External Church Relations (DECR). By the Patriarch Pimen and Holy Synod's resolution of December 30, 1986, Archimandrite Feofan was nominated as Bishop of Kashira, vicar of the diocese of Moscow.

On January 10, 1987, on the Saturday after the Nativity of Christ, Metropolitan Filaret of Minsk and Byelorussia, chairman of Department for External Church Relations, presided over the nomination of Archimandrite Feofan as Bishop of Kashira. On the following day, he was consecrated as bishop.

All his consequent service was carried out by His Grace Feofan far away from the Motherland. On July 19, 1988, he was appointed rector of the ROC Karlovy Vary representation. On January 31, 1991, he became administrator of the diocese of Berlin and Leipzig. On March 25 of the same year, Bishop Feofan, by the decision of the Holy Synod, was relieved of his duties as rector in Karlovy Vary and appointed as ruling bishop of the diocese of Berlin. Since December 23, 1992, due to the merger of the three German dioceses, he was given the title of Bishop of Berlin and Germany. On February 25, 1996, he was elevated to the rank of archbishop.

The period of Archbishop Feofan's service in Germany fell on a difficult time. After the unification of the country in 1991, millions of migrants came to settle in the Federative Republic of Germany from the former USSR. Many of them had been raised as Orthodox and replenished the number of parishioners of the Berlin diocesan churches, while for the rest the Russian Orthodox Church became a spiritual home, a link with the Fatherland they had left. His Eminence faced the challenge of establishing new church communities, training the clergy, arranging parish life. However, Archbishop Feofan saw his main task in 'giving Christ to people', as he said in one of his interviews.

As a result of this Christocentric work carried out for his 25 years as Archbishop of Germany, dozens of priests were trained and ordained in the See of Berlin, while the number of parishes exceeded one hundred. As Metropolitan Augustine, chairman of the Orthodox Bishops' Conference in Germany said, the number of Orthodox Christians in Germany, who had been actually absent in the early 90s, amounts today to two and a half million, and 'it became possible thanks to such people as His Eminence Feofan'. For his zealous service of the Church, Archbishop Feofan was granted high church and state awards.

Bearing tireless witness to the truth of the Gospel, taking effective care of the Christian education and spiritual and moral formation of compatriots, His Eminence gained respect and love of the clergy and the people of God. With his excellent education and broad erudition, His Eminence could find a common language with all whom the Lord sent him on his life journey. Strict and exacting during the liturgy and invariably unaffected and warm-hearted in everyday contacts, he literarily radiated Christian love and was a true father for his flock.

His Eminence was seriously ill during the last months. But in this condition, suffering physically, he found strength to talk with visitors, consoling, encouraging, calling not to despair and inspiring hope. It all made the death of His Eminence Feofan even harder for all who knew him.

The funeral service for Archbishop Feofan will take place on September 14 after the Divine Liturgy at the Cathedral of the Resurrection in Berlin. According to His Eminence's last will, he will be buried at the Russian Orthodox cemetery in Tegel.

The website of the Diocese of Berlin and Germany

DECR Communication Service

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