



## **Molieben of thanksgiving marks the 170th anniversary of the Russian Ecclesiastical Mission in Jerusalem**



On the 170<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the establishment of the Russian Orthodox Church's representation in the Holy Land, a molieben of thanksgiving and a requiem service for the late heads of the Russian Ecclesiastical Mission and for all the brethren and sisters who had worked there were celebrated at the Church of the Holy Martyr Alexandra the Empress in Jerusalem. Archimandrite Alexander (Yelisov), head of the Mission, officiated at the services.

The close ties had existed between Russia and the Orthodox East long before the Mission was created. The first Russian pilgrims came to venerate the shrines of the Holy Land shortly after Rus' had embraced Christianity.

On the 11<sup>th</sup>/23<sup>rd</sup> of February 1847, the Russian Ecclesiastical Mission in Jerusalem was established by

the decision of Emperor Nicholas I. The Mission was to become a sign of “visible unity of the Churches of Jerusalem, Antioch and Russia,” to take care of pilgrims, to carry out missionary activities, and to help organize schools and seminaries.

Through the efforts of the heads of the Russian Ecclesiastical Mission – Archimandrite Porphyrius (Uspensky), Archimandrite Leonid (Kavelin), Archimandrite Leonid (Sentsov), and, of course, Archimandrite Antonin (Kapustin) – the Mission grew, developing its ecclesiastical and economic activities and gradually turning into the remarkable phenomenon known today as “Russian Palestine.”

This year is marked by several memorable dates, such as the 135<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the establishment of the Imperial Orthodox Palestine Society, the 145<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Cathedral of the Holy Trinity in Jerusalem, the 170<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the foundation of the Russian Ecclesiastical Mission in Jerusalem, and the 200<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the birth of Archimandrite Antonin (Kapustin), one of the most renowned servants of the Russian Church in the Holy Land.

These memorable dates will be celebrated throughout the year, the Press Service of the Russian Ecclesiastical Mission in Jerusalem reports.

*DECR Communication Service*

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