# Patriarch Kirill consecrates Trinity Cathedral in Paris

On December 4, 2016, the Feast of the Presentation of the Most Holy Mother of God to the Temple, His Holiness Patriarch Kirill of Moscow and All Russia consecrated the Cathedral of the Holy Trinity in Paris. The cathedral is a part of the Orthodox Spiritual and Cultural Center compound built on the Siene embankment.

In the newly consecrated church, the Primate of the Russian Orthodox Church presided over the Divine Liturgy. His Holiness was assisted by Metropolitan Innocent of Vilnius and Lithuania; Metropolitan Mark of Ryazan and Mikhailovsk, head of the Moscow Patriarchate financial and economic office; Archbishop Michael of Geneva and Western Europe, Archbishop Yelisey of Sourozh; Archbishop Sergiy of Solnechnogorsk, head of the Moscow Patriarchate administrative secretariat; Bishop Nestor of Chersonese; Bishop Antoniy, head of the Moscow Patriarchate office for institutions abroad; Archimandrite Philaret (Bulekov), Moscow Patriarchate department for external church relations vice-chairman; Archpriest Nicholas Rebinder, rector of the church of the Three Hierarchs in Paris; Hegumen Philip (Riabykh), Moscow Patriarchate representative to the Council of Europe, and clergy of the

Diocese of Chersonese.

Among the concelebrants were also representatives of Local Orthodox Churches including Metropolitan Emmanuel of France and Archbishop John of Charioupolis, administrator of the Archdiocese of Orthodox Russian churches in Western Europe (Patriarchate of Constantinople); Metropolitan Ignatius of France, Western and Southern Europe (Patriarchate of Antioch), Metropolitan Joseph of Western and Southern Europe, and Bishop Mark of Niamets (Romanian Orthodox Church).

The liturgical music was performed by a combined choir of churches in Paris conducted by Ms. M. Politova and the choir of the St. Genevieve of Paris Spiritual and Educational Center, conducted by Ms. S. Volkova. The hymns were sung in Church Slavonic and French.

The service was broadcast live by the French KTO and the Russian 'Soyuz' channels. The broadcast could also be seen on large screens installed at the church walls for those who could not get in the overcrowded church.

After the Prayer of Fervent Supplication His Holiness Kirill lifted up a prayer for peace in Ukraine.

Present at the service were A. Kolpakov, head of the presidential administrative directorate; Senator Jean-Pierre Cheveneman, French government special representative for developing relations with Russia; Russian Ambassador to France A. Orlov and Paris Mayor Anne Hidalgo.

Among the honorary guests were also Ms. S. V. Medvedeva; Ms. Helen Carrere d'Ancausse, permanent secretary of Academie Française, Archbishop Luigi Ventura, apostolic nuncio in France (Roman Catholic Church) and other representatives of Christian confessions.

After the service, His Holiness addressed himself to the worshippers with a primatial homily.

As a gift to the Cathedral of the Holy Trinity, His Holiness gave it an Icon of Our Lady of Iveron. He thanked many people who helped to build the cathedral. 'I would like to thank the President of the Russian Federation Vladimir Putin, the ex-President of France Nicholas Sarkozy and the present President of this country Mr. François Hollande because it was a positive decision made on the highest level that predetermined an opportunity for carrying out this excellent project. Once again, I would like to thank the city of Paris in your person, Ms. Mayor. I thank all those who took part in this remarkable task, who raised and donated funds, who came to help, who gave their support', he said.

His Holiness also thanked Bishop Nestor of Chersonese and presented him with a pectoral icon and a cross produced for the celebrations devoted to the millennium of the demise of the Grand Prince

Vladimir Equal-to-the-Apostles.

In recognition of their help to the Diocese of Chersonese and to the construction of the Russian Spiritual and Cultural Center in Paris, His Holiness presented the Russian Orthodox Church awards to a number of people, among them architect Jean-Michel Willmotte and Russian Ambassador A. Orlov.

His Holiness greeted the honorary guests and thanked his concelebrants, stressing that ‘when we celebrate the Divine Liturgy together, we demonstrate our true and intransient unity. This unity overcomes any differences, cultural, national, linguistic. And today we could rejoice in this remarkable image of the unity of the Orthodox Church. Once again I cordially greet you all and may God’s blessing and the Protecting Veil of the Most Blessed Queen of Heaven be spread over the remarkable city of Paris and over France and over all who live here, regardless of their ethnic background or religion’.

In memory of the festive event, Bishop Nestor presented Patriarch Kirill with an icon of St. Genevieve, the holy patroness of Paris.

*DECR Communication Service*

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