His Holiness Patriarch Kirill completes his visit to Great Britain

On 15-18 October 2016, His Holiness Patriarch Kirill of Moscow and All Russia visited the Sourozh diocese celebrating the 300th anniversary of the Russian Orthodox Church's presence in the British Isles.

His Holiness was accompanied by Metropolitan Hilarion of Volokolamsk, chairman of the Moscow Patriarchate's Department for External Church Relations; Archbishop Mark of Berlin, Germany and Great Britain; Bishop Sergiy of Solnechnogorsk, head of the Moscow Patriarchate's Administrative Secretariat; Bishop Antoniy of Bogorodsk, head of the Moscow Patriarchate's Administration for Institutions Abroad; Archimandrite Philaret (Bulekov), DECR vice-chairman; Archpriest Andrey Milkin, head of the Patriarchal Protocol Service; and Rev. Alexander Volkov, head of the Patriarchal Press Service.

At the London airport the Primate of the Russian Orthodox Church was met by Archbishop Yelisey of Sourozh and representatives of the Sourozh diocesan clergy, as well as by Mr. Alexander Yakovenko, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Russian Federation to Great Britain.

On the first day of his visit, His Holiness Patriarch Kirill celebrated a thanksgiving in 32 Welbeck Street in which a ROC church was accommodated from 1813 to 1921.

In the evening of October 15, His Holiness celebrated Matins at the London Church of the Dormition of the Mother of God and the Holy Royal Passion-Bearers (Russian Orthodox Church Outside of Russia).

On October 16, the Primate of the Russian Church visited the Cathedral of the Holy Dormition of the Sourozh diocese in London. Patriarch Kirill performed the rite of the blessing of a fresco depicting the Most Holy Theotokos, recently painted on the western wall, and of the bells that will be afterwards installed at the cathedral's belfry. After celebrating the Divine Liturgy in the newly consecrated Cathedral of the Holy Dormition, His Holiness addressed the worshippers with a Primatial homily.

The same day His Holiness Patriarch Kirill visited the Royal Geographical Society (RGS), where Mr. Alasdair Macleod, RGS Head of Enterprise and Resources, awarded him with a RGS membership card.

Later on that day a reception on the occasion of the 300th anniversary of the Russian Orthodoxy in Great Britain and Ireland took place in London.

In the morning of October 17, His Holiness Patriarch Kirill of Moscow and All Russia had a working meeting in London with His Holiness Patriarch Irinej of Serbia.

That same day H.E. Mr. Alexander Yakovenko, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Russian Federation to Great Britain, gave a reception in honour of His Holiness Patriarch Kirill.

Later the Primate of the Russian Orthodox Church performed the rite of the blessing of a new headstone at the grave of Metropolitan Anthony (Bloom) of Sourozh at the Brompton Cemetery and celebrated a litiya for Vladyka Anthony.

On October 18, Metropolitan Hilarion of Volokolamsk, chairman of the Moscow Patriarchate's Department for External Church Relations, met in London with Baroness Joyce Anelay, Minister of State for the Commonwealth and the UN at the Foreign and Commonwealth Office.

The same day, at the Buckingham Palace in London, His Holiness Patriarch Kirill met with Queen Elizabeth II of Great Britain and Northern Ireland. Discussed at the meeting was a wide range of issues. Patriarch Kirill told Her Majesty about the ongoing church revival in Russia, which is visibly expressed, among other things, in the growing number of parishes, development of religious education and theology, creation of new dioceses and development of new forms of church ministry. Among other issues raised at the meeting was the current situation of Christians in Europe.

Later the Primate of the Russian Orthodox Church met with Archbishop Justin Welby of Canterbury. Patriarch Kirill and Archbishop Welby emphasized that the Russian Orthodox Church and the Church of England played an important role in maintaining and strengthening the relations between the peoples of Russia and Great Britain.

To conclude his visit, His Holiness Patriarch Kirill gave a press-conference to the Russian and foreign mass media at the London airport.

DECR Communication Service

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