Russian-German youth theological meetings held in Moscow

From September 27 to October 3, 2016, Youth Theological Meetings are being held in Moscow, St. Petersburg and Nizhniy Novgorod, with the blessing of His Holiness Patriarch Kirill of Moscow and All Russia. The events are organized by the Churches in Europe working group of the St. Petersburg Dialogue forum. This project enables students of theological departments of German universities to familiarize themselves with the system of higher religious education in Russia and to establish academic contacts.

The group of German students is led by Dr. J. Oeldemann, director of the Institute of Ecumenics in Paderborn. From the Russian side, it is accompanied by S. Ochkanov, Moscow Patriarchate's department for external church relations office for the far abroad, and Yu. Fokavina, adviser to the directorate of the St. Petersburg Dialogue forum.

On September 27, the German guests visited Sergiyev Posad. Upon their arrival, they were taken on a tour of the museum of Moscow Theological Academy and Seminary to introduce them to the history of the Academy and to see Russian church art works. Then the German students met with the pro-rector for accreditation Rev. Anthony Borisov and students of the academy and seminary. Father Anthony introduced them to the peculiarities of the educational and formational processes in the theological schools of the Russian Church.

An excursion was organized for the guests in the St. Sergius Lavra of the Holy Trinity.

On September 28, the participants in the Youth Theological Meetings visited the St. Tikhon's Orthodox University of the Humanities in Moscow. They were received by the pro-rector for international work Archpriest George Orekhanov and the head of the Chair of Practical Theology Archpriest Pavel Khondzinsky. The meeting was attended by students of the university. The German guests were introduced to the history of the university and the system of theological education in Russia. They also had a talk with students.

On the same day, the students visited the Ss Cyril and Methodius Institute for Post-Graduate Studies, where they were welcomed by Hieromonk Afanasy (Mikryukov), academy inspector, Deacon Sergiy Cherkasov, assistant to the pro-rector, D. Serov, acting head of the international department, K. Gandur, senior lecturer of the Chair of Foreign Languages, as well as post-graduate students. Father Afanasy explained to the guest the structure and special features of the academic process in the CMI. The

German students, in their turn, asked questions concerning various aspects of church life in Russia today.

The visit to the capital concluded with a tour of the Church of the Christ the Saviour. The program of the Youth Theological Meetings also provides for a visit to Nizhny Novgorod and St. Petersburg.

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