



Head of the Moscow Patriarchate's Administration for Institutions Abroad visits North Korea

On 12-16 August 2016, with the blessing of His Holiness Patriarch Kirill of Moscow and All Russia, Bishop Antony of Bogorodsk, head of the Moscow Patriarchate's Administration for Institutions Abroad, visited the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and took part in the celebrations marking the 10th anniversary of the consecration of the Church of the Life-Giving Trinity in Pyongyang.

Bishop Antony arrived in Pyongyang on August 12, and was met at the local airport by Mr. Alexander Minaev, Minister Counselor of Russia' Embassy in the DPRK; Mr. Vitaly Kim Chi Son, chairman of the DPRK Orthodox Committee; and Rev. Feodor Kim, rector of the Holy Trinity Church.

On August 13, the hierarch of the Russian Orthodox Church met with the chairman and staff members of the DPRK Orthodox Committee. The participants in the meeting discussed various issues concerning the Church of the Life-Giving Trinity in Pyongyang. In particular, they expressed satisfaction with the successful completion of the church's wall-paintings.

In the evening of the same day Bishop Antony celebrated the All-Night Vigil at the Holy Trinity Church. Concelebrating with him were Rev. Feodor Kim; archpriest Alexy Sabansky, a cleric of the Vladivostok diocese; and deacon Igor Tsarev.

On August 14, Bishop Antony of Bogorodsk officiated at the Divine Liturgy in the Church of the Life-Giving Trinity. Among those praying at the service were Mr. Alexander Matsegora, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Russian Federation to the Democratic People's Republic of Korea; staff members of the Russian Embassy; and representative of diplomatic missions of some European countries.

During the Lesser Entrance, the archpastor bestowed a pectoral cross on Rev. Feodor Kim. The rector of the Holy Trinity Church was granted the right to wear the pectoral cross in compliance with the decision of His Holiness Patriarch Kirill of Moscow and All Russia.

After the Liturgy, Mr. Vitaly Kim Chi Son warmly greeted Bishop Antony and noted the importance of the Church of the Life-Giving Trinity for the Orthodox Christians living in Pyongyang. As the chairman of the Orthodox Committee emphasized, for the past 10 years the church had become a visible symbol of

friendship between Russia and the DPRK. Mr. Kim Chi Son asked Bishop Antony to convey his gratitude to His Holiness Patriarch Kirill for his concern for the needs of the church and the life of the Orthodox community in Pyongyang.

Bishop Antony of Bogorodsk conveyed to the worshippers the blessing from His Holiness Patriarch Kirill of Moscow and All Russia who ten years ago, in his capacity as chairman of the Moscow Patriarchate's Department for External Church Relations, consecrated the Church of the Life-Giving Trinity.

With the blessing of the Primate of the Russian Orthodox Church, Bishop Antony presented Mr. Alexander Matsegora, Russia's Ambassador to the DPRK, with Patriarchal awards in consideration of his assistance rendered to the Holy Trinity Church.

That same day Bishop Antony of Bogorodsk met with Mr. Kim Yong Dae, deputy chairman of the Presidium of the DPRK Supreme People's Assembly, and with Mr. Kan Ji Yong, chairman of the Central Committee of the DPRK Association of the Faithful.

On August 15, the DPRK celebrated the national holiday, the Day of Liberation of Korea. In the morning Bishop Antony of Bogorodsk and Russian Ambassador Alexander Matsegora laid wreaths at the Monument of Liberation at the Moranbong Hill and took part in commemorative events at the cemetery of Soviet soldiers in Sadong district. The Russian hierarch celebrated requiem litiya at the cemetery's Orthodox memorial cross.

That same day later Bishop Antony visited Russia's Embassy in the DPRK, where he had a working meeting with Ambassador Alexander Matsegora. A reception on behalf of the delegation of the Russian Orthodox Church followed.

On August 16, the archpastor and those accompanying him on his trip departed for Beijing, website of the Church of the Holy Great Martyr Catherine in Rome reports.

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