Delegation of the Russian Orthodox Church attend World Youth Day events in Krakow

On July 24, 2016, with the blessing of His Holiness Patriarch Kirill of Moscow and All Russia and at the invitation of the Archbishop of Krakow Cardinal Stanislaw Dziwisz, a delegation of the Russian Orthodox Church led by Metropolitan Isidore of Smolensk and Roslavl arrived in Krakow for the 21st World Youth Days. The delegation included Hieromonk Seraphin (Amelchenkov), executive secretary of the Moscow Patriarchate chancellery; Hieromonk Gennady (Voitishko), director of the information service of the Synodal Department for Religious Education and Catechism; M. G. Kuksov, deputy head of the Moscow Patriarchate administrative secretariat and head of the Moscow Patriarchate's youth department, and S. Alferov and S. Monakhov, staff members of the Moscow Patriarchate's department for external church relations.

At John Paul II international airport Krakow-Balice, the representatives of the Russian Orthodox Church were met by Auxiliary Bishop Grzegorz Ryś of the Krakow Archdiocese; Archpriest Jaroslav Antosyuk, rector of the Orthodox Parish of the Dormition in Krakow (Polish Orthodox Church); and A. Minin, Russia's consul general in Krakow.

During the first day of their stay in Poland, the delegation visited the Orthodox Parish in Krakow for a concert of church music and took part in the opening of the Colours of Orthodoxy, a photo-exhibition devoted to today's life of the Polish Orthodox Church. Metropolitan Isidore conveyed his blessing and best best on behalf of Patriarch Kirill and thanked the rector of the parish for the hospitality.

On July 25, the delegation was warmly received by Cardinal Stanislaw Dziwisz at the Archbishop's palace in Krakow. Present at the solemn meetings were also Archbishop Celestino Migliore, who is completing his service as Apostolic Nuncio in Poland and is appointed to the same position in Russia; Rev. Karol Wapinski, administrator of the apostolic nunciature in Warsaw, and Rev. Tomasz Szopa, personal secretary to the cardinal. In his welcome speech, Cardinal Dziwisz stressed the need for joint efforts of the two Churches in advocating traditional Christian values in today's secular world, pointing to the importance of continuation of the Russian-Polish Orthodox-Catholic dialogue in the framework of the Joint Message on Reconciliation to the Peoples of Russia and Poland signed in 2012.

On July 25, the delegation visited Russia's Consulate General in Krakow for a talk with the staff members headed by A. Minin. The sides exchanged opinions about cooperation between the Russian Consulate and the Orthodox parish in Krakow in the area of development and strengthening of Polish-Russian religious and cultural relations.

On the same day, the delegation attended the festive mass on the occasion of the opening of the World Youth Days at Krakow Blonia.

On July 27, the delegation met with Russia' Ambassador to Poland S. Andreyev and made another visit to the Orthodox parish in Krakow for a talk with Bishop George of Siemiatycze, the Orthodox ordinary of the Polish Army. Welcoming the guests on behalf of His Beatitude Metropolitan Sava of Warsaw and All Poland, His Grace George noted that the arrival of a Moscow Patriarchate delegation to Krakow is of a great importance for the consolidation of ties between the two Local Orthodox Churches. He also asked to convey best wishes to His Holiness Patriarch Kirill on behalf of His Beatitude.

On July 28, the delegation attended the festive mass at the monastery of Jasna Gora in Częstochowa. Devoted to the 1050th anniversary of the Baptism of Poland, the service was led by Pope Francis of Rome. After the service, the delegation met with the Primate of the Roman Catholic Church. Metropolitan Isidore conveyed to the Pope of Rome greetings and best regards from Patriarch Kirill of Moscow and All Russia and presented him with an icon of Our Lady of Kazan 'Odigitria'. After that the delegation had brief talks with the Polish President Mr. A. Duda and Prime Minister Ms. B. Szydło.

On July 30, the delegation visited the prayer vigil led by the Pope Francis of Rome in Brzegi near

Krakow.

On July 31 the delegation departed for Moscow.

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