Celebrations in the Monastery of Our Lady of Tikhvin attended by guests from Local Orthodox Churches



On July 8, 2016, the eve of the Day of the Tikvin Icon of the Mother of God, the chancellor of the Moscow Patriarchate Metropolitan Varsonofy of St. Petersburg and Ladoga, celebrated All-Night Vigil at the Cathedral of the Assumption at the Assumption Monastery of Our Lady of Tikhvin.

Among the concelebrating hierarchs were Metropolitan Lev of Novgorod and Staraya Russa, Archbishop Peter of Chicago and mid-America (Russian Church Outside Russia); Bishop Anthony of Moravici, representative of the Patriarch of Serbia to the Patriarch of Moscow and All Russia; Bishop Mstislav of Tikhvin and Lodeinopol, abbot of the monastery; Bishops Paul of Chicago (Orthodox Church in America) and Ignaty of Armavir and Labinsk.

On the day of the feast, Metropolitan Varsonofy celebrated the Divine Liturgy, assisted by Archbishop Peter of Chicago and mid-America, Archbishop Ambrose of Petergof, rector of St. Petersburg Theological Schools; Bishop Anthony of Moravici, Bishop Nazary of Kronstadt, Bishop Mstislav of

Tikhvin, Bishop Paul of Chicago, Bishop Ignaty of Armavir, as well as Archpriest Sergiy Kuksevich, secretary of the diocesan administration; clergy of the Metropolia of St. Petersburg and American dioceses, and brethren of the monastery in holy orders. Among the worshippers were mothers superior and nuns from convents of the Metropolia of St. Petersburg.

A thanksgiving was celebrated at the miracle-working icon of the Mother of God.

The ruling bishop conveyed a message of greetings from His Holiness Patriarch Kirill on the occasion of the feast and addressed the congregation with an archpastoral homily. 'Today, with a great joy we have come to this monastery of the Mother of God as we usually come to visit our mothers in order to celebrate important dates in the life of our parents. We celebrate the appearance of the icon, which took place in the remote 14th century and remember the miracles it worked through all the subsequent centuries', he said.

He reminded the congregation of the many times in the Motherland's history when the Mother of God interceded for the Russian people, especially in the years of hard trials: 'Today we glorify her image, through which the Mother of God showed her love and care for us through centuries. Thank God, this image has returned to Russia! We can kneel and open our hearts before the Heavenly Queen, to pray to her, to recite akathistoses, to sing troparions. What she has done for us serves our salvation. And I wish you all God's help through the intercession of the Mother of God'.

Metropolitan Varsonofy thanked Bishop Mstislav for the hospitality. In his response, the abbot of the monastery said, 'Today the city of Tikhvin is rejoicing. Today an assembly of bishops, a great many priests and hundreds of worshippers venerate the icon of the Mother of God called 'Tikhvinskaya', and present here today are our guests from Chicago – His Eminence Paul, His Eminence Peter and Father Alexander, a son of Archbishop Sergiy Garklavs, the long-standing guardian of the Tikhvin icon. The icon has returned to the place in which it was found many centuries ago. We pray before it and ask the Mother of God for her help to the monastery, to the whole Church of Russia and to all our people'.

He said that the guests from America brought over a piece of soil from the place in which the church of the Holy Life-Giving Trinity stands. It was built by the first holy martyer of the Petersburg land, Archpriest Ioann Kochurov, with the blessing of Bishop Tikhon, the future Patriarch.

Bishop Mstislav presented Metropolitan Varsonofy with a commemorative medal devoted to the feast of the Tikhvin Icon of the Mother of God.

The Tikhvin Monastery was founded in 1560 for the Tikhvin Icon of the Mother of God, which was miraculously found in 1383. It appeared to fishermen on Ladoga Lake, next to Old Ladoga. In the

mid-1020s, the monastery was closed and looted. During the war, the Hitlerites took the icon away. It got to the Baltics, later to Germany and from Germany to the USA. In 1995, the monastery was handed over to the Russian Orthodox Church and the Cathedral of the Assumption began to be restored. The main shrine of the monastery was returned to Russia in 2004.

Metropolia of St. Petersburg site

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