# Primate of Russian Church celebrates Liturgy at the Church of Protecting Veil of the Mother of God in Asuncion



On 15 February 2016, the Feast of the Meeting of Our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, His Holiness Patriarch Kirill of Moscow and All Russia celebrated the Divine Liturgy at the Church of the Protecting Veil of the Mother of God in Asuncion, capital of Paraguay, in the diocese of Carakas and South America of the Russian Orthodox Church Outside of Russia.

The church built in the historical centre of Paraguay's capital by the Russian immigrants in the 1920s, is rather small. To enable several hierarchs to celebrate the Liturgy on the feast day of the Meeting of the Lord, the altar was placed in the middle of the church, before the iconostasis, while the worshippers prayed outside.

The service was broadcast live on a screen installed in the street outside the church. Among those who

prayed there were members of the Association of Russians and their Descendents in Paraguay, as well as the Russian immigrants, their families, and members of the Russian Embassy. Orthodox Christians in Asuncion greeted His Holiness Patriarch Kirill with great warmth and enthusiasm.

Concelebrating with His Holiness were Metropolitan Hilarion of Volokolamsk, Chairman of the Moscow Patriarchate's Department for External Church Relations; Metropolitan Anthony of Borispol and Brovary, Chancellor of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church; Bishop Peter of Cleveland (ROCOR); Bishop Sergiy of Solnechnogorsk, head of the Moscow Patriarchate's Administrative Secretariat; Bishop John of Caracas and South America, rector of the Church of the Protecting Veil of the Mother of God (ROCOR); Bishop George of Canberra (ROCOR); Bishop Leonid of Argentina and South America; Bishop Nicholas of Manhattan (ROCOR); Bishop Anthony of Bogorodsk, head of the Moscow Patriarchate's Administration for Institutions Abroad; Archimandrite Philaret (Bulekov), DECR vice-chairman; Rev. Alexander Volkov, head of the Patriarchal Press Service; and Rev. Maxim Boyarov, rector of the Buenos Aires Church of All Saints Who Shone Forth in the Russian Land.

Among those who attended the service were Mr. Nikolai Tavdumadze, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Russian Federation to the Republic of Paraguay; Mr. Igor Fleischner-Shevelev, Honorary Consul of the Russian Federation in the Republic of Paraguay; Archbishop Eliseo Antonio Ariotti, Apostolic Nuncio to Paraguay; Archbishop Edmundo *Ponciano Valenzuela* Mellid of Asuncion; and Bishop Adalberto *Martínez* Flores of the Military Ordinariate of Paraguay.

During the Liturgy, the Gospel, the Epistle, the Creed and the Lord's Prayer were read out in the Church Slavonic and Spanish languages.

After the service, Bishop John of Caracas and South America greeted the Primate of the Russian Orthodox Church, saying in particular, "I am glad to welcome you to the diocese of South America, the very heart of South America – Paraguay. It is an historic event for us, a great joy and an opportunity to manifest the unity of the Russian Church. Quite often we have a feeling that we are far way and neglected, but we see that you, Your Holiness, take paternal care of us. I would like to thank you for the paternal love that your have shown by visiting this continent."

Upon delivering his Primatial homily, the Primate of the Russian Church presented the rector and parishioners of the church with an icon of the Holy Right-Believing Prince Daniel of Moscow. His Holiness expressed his warmhearted gratitude to Bishop John for his service and awarded him a panagia commemorating the millennium of the blessed demise of the Holy Prince Vladimir Equal-to-the-Apostles. Bishop George of Canberra and Bishop Nicholas of Manhattan received the same panagias.

The worshippers were given icons of Christ the Saviour with the Patriarchal blessing.

His Holiness Patriarch Kirill also presented the representatives of the Roman Catholic Church in Paraguay with medals marking his visit to Latin America and books telling about his ministry.

*Press Service of the Patriarch of Moscow and All Russia/*

*DECR Communication Service*

*Photo by Press Service of the Patriarch of Moscow and All Russia*

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