



## **His Holiness Patriarch Kirill and His Holiness Patriarch Irinej bless monument to Tsar Nicholas II the Passion-Bearer in Belgrade**

On 16 November 2014, His Holiness Patriarch Kirill of Moscow and All Russia and His Holiness Patriarch Irinej of Serbia conducted the blessing of a monument to the Tsar and Passion-Bearer, the last Russian Emperor Nicholas II, in Belgrade.

H.E. Tomislav Nikolić, President of the Republic of Serbia, took part in the solemn unveiling of the monument.

Among those attending the ceremony were Mr. Alexander Torshin, first deputy chairman of the Federation Council of the Russian Federation; Mr. Vladimir Medinsky, chairman of the Russian Military-Historical Society, Minister of Culture of the Russian Federation; members of the Government of the Republic of Serbia; Ms. Natalia Narochitskaya, president of the Historical Perspective Foundation; members of the official delegation of the Russian Orthodox Church; and numerous citizens of Belgrade.

After saying a prayer and sprinkling the monument with the holy water, His Holiness Patriarch Kirill addressed all those present with a brief homily, saying in particular:

“We are present at an event of historical significance – the blessing of the monument to the Holy Passion-Bearer, Tsar Nicholas II. Emperor Nicholas had done so much to save Serbia and the whole Europe that it cannot be described in a few words. It is remarkable that the first monument in his honour outside of Russia has been erected here, in Belgrade.

“The Serbian people were cherishing the memory of Emperor Nicholas II even at the time when his name could not be said aloud, when one could only speak ill of him. However, the truth has a great power. Sometimes we see grass struggling through asphalt, life coming out in the open. The same is with the truth – it cannot be hidden under the asphalt or concrete; sooner or later it comes into life of next generations. The truth about the sacrificial heroic deed of Emperor Nicholas II has struggled through the ferroconcrete slab laid on his name.

“I would like to thank the people and the authorities of Serbia, as well as all the compatriots who have done much to honour the memory of this great man in this remarkable monument.”

The participants in the ceremony laid wreaths to the monument.

His Holiness Patriarch Irinej of Serbia and the President of the Republic of Serbia, Mr. Tomislav Nikolić, also greeted those present at the ceremony. As the President of Serbia noted, yet another symbol of the centuries-old friendship has appeared in Belgrade.

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Source: <https://mospat.ru/en/news/50900/>