700th anniversary of the birth of St Sergius of Radonezh celebrated in North Korea



With the blessing of Bishop Innokenty of Ussuriysk, rector of the Church of the Dormition in Vladivostok, an icon of St Sergius of Radonezh with a particle of his holy relics was brought from Vladivostok to the Church of the Holy Trinity in Pyongyang. At the invitation of the Orthodox Committee of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and the Orthodox parish in Pyongyang, Rev. Alexy Sabansky, a cleric of the

diocese of Vladivostok, visited North Korea on 17-20 October 2014, and delivered the icon to Pyongyang.

On the 18th of October, a thanksgiving before the icon of St Sergius of Radonezh was said in a prayer room of the Embassy of the Russian Federation in the DPRK. Among those present at the service were H.E. Alexander Timonin, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Russian Federation to the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, and staff members of the diplomatic mission.

As part of the celebrations held in the Russian Church in the year of the 700th anniversary of the birth of St Sergius, the Divine Services were conducted at the Church of the Holy Trinity in Pyongyang. Archpriest Alexy Sabansky and priest Feodor Kim, rector of the Pyongyang parish, celebrated the All-Night Vigil on the 18th of October, and the Divine Liturgy on the 19th of October, the 19th Sunday after Pentecost. Praying at the service were some sixty people, including representatives of the Orthodox Committee of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, staff members of the Russian Embassy and other Russian institutions in North Korea, and representatives of the mass media.

After the service Archpriest Alexy Sabansky read out the Primatial homily of Patriarch Kirill of Moscow and All Russia on the occasion the 700th anniversary of the birth of St Sergius of Radonezh.

During his visit to North Korea, Rev. Alexy Sabansky saw the sights of Pyongyang and the places associated with the life of the two leaders of North Korea, Kim Il Sung and Kim Jong Il, the website of the diocese of Vladivostok reports.

The diocese of Vladivostok and the Parish of the Holy Trinity in Pyongyang have maintained fruitful relationships. The Russian clergy and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea have established good contacts. Thus, in October 2013, a delegation of the diocese of Vladivostok, led by Bishop Innokenty of Ussuriysk, paid a visit to the Orthodox parish in Pyongyang on the occasion of the 65th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between Russia and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea.

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