

In Belgrade Patriarch Irinej of Serbia participates in events marking First World War Centenary



On 1 August 2014, marking 100 years since the outbreak of the First World War, solemn events to commemorate the Russian soldiers, who had laid down their lives in the name of Serbia's freedom, took place at the Russian Necropolis in Belgrade.

His Holiness Patriarch Irinej of Serbia celebrated the Divine Liturgy at the Chapel of the Iveron Icon of the Mother of God, located in the territory of the Necropolis, and the requiem service for the commanders and soldiers of the Russian army buried in Belgrade. Concelebrating with the Primate of the Serbian Orthodox Church were archpriest Vitaly Tarasyev, representative of the Patriarch of Moscow and All Russia to the Serbian Patriarchal See, and clerics of the Belgrade archdiocese.

"Buried in the Russian Necropolis are heroes who fulfilled one of the greatest commandments of Christ – who gave life for their neighbours," His Holiness Patriarch Irinej said after the service. "The Russian people are our brothers, whom we will never betray."

Later, wreaths were laid to the monument of Russian Glory and the monument to the Serbian soldiers who had died during the First World War. That same day, wreaths in tribute to the heroes of the siege of Belgrade were set afloat at the confluence of the Danube and Sava rivers, at the site of first battles for Belgrade. During those battles, many Russian artillerymen and sailors of the Black Sea Fleet died.

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