Patriarch John X of Antioch and All the East and Patriarch Kirill of Moscow and All Russia visit the Moscow Representation of the Church of Antioch



On 28th January 2014, His Beatitude Patriarch John X of Antioch and All the East and His Holiness Patriarch Kirill of Moscow and All Russia visited the Church of Archangel Gabriel – the Representation of the Orthodox Church of Antioch in Moscow. The Primates were met by Archbishop Nifon of Philippopolis, representative of the Patriarch of Antioch to the Moscow Patriarchate, parishioners and guests, including Sergei Stepashin, head of the Imperial Orthodox Palestine Society, Vladimir Yakunin, chairman of the Board of Trustees of the Centre of National Glory and of the St. Andrew Foundation, as well as the heads of diplomatic mission accredited in Moscow.

His Beatitude Patriarch John X was accompanied by Metropolitan Basilios of Akkar, Metropolitan Ephraim of Tripoli, archimandrite Philip (Yazigi), archimandrite Parthenios (Allati), archdeacon Gerasimos (Kabbas), and a group of laymen.

His Beatitude John X and His Holiness Kirill celebrated a prayer service in the Arabic and Russian languages. Praying in the church were Metropolitan Hilarion of Volokolamsk, chairman of the Moscow Patriarchate's Department for External Church Relations (DECR), Metropolitan Athanasios of Cyrena, representative of the Orthodox Church of Alexandria to the Patriarch of Moscow and All Russia, Bishop Panteleimon of Orekhovo-Zuevo, chairman of the Synodal Department for Charity and Social Ministry, archpriest Nikolai Balashov, deputy chairman of the DECR; archimandrite Stephanos (Dispirakis), representative of the Orthodox Church of Jerusalem to the Patriarch of Moscow and All Russia; archpriest Igor Yakimchuk, DECR secretary for inter-Orthodox relations; and hegumen Arseniy (Sokolov), representative of the Patriarch of Moscow and All Russia to the Patriarch of Antioch and All the East, and clerics of the church.

Archbishop Nifon greeted the Primates and thanked His Holiness Patriarch Kirill for his caring and attentive attitude to the representation.

He presented His Beatitude John X with an icon of the Saviour and His Holiness Kirill with a cross.

The Primate of the Russian Orthodox Church said in his homily:

'Your Beatitude!

'I am happy to be with you in this historical church in the downtown Moscow. The Representation of the Church of Antioch plays a very important part in the strengthening of relations between our nations.

'We thank Archbishop Nifon for his many years of ministry in Moscow. He brings a vital contribution to the religious life of our capital city.

'I cordially greet the parishioners, whom I am happy to see always, but especially on the day when His Beatitude is visiting.

'His Beatitude ascended to the throne in the difficult time for Christians in Lebanon and Syria. He has done a lot for upholding the Church, uniting people, maintaining good relations with the Muslims, and assisting the establishment of civil peace.'

His Beatitude was honoured with the highest award of the Imperial Orthodox Palestine Society – 'The Star of Bethlehem' Order.

His Beatitude John X addressed the Primate of the Russian Church, saying that His presence in the House of Antioch in Moscow was a great joy and blessing to Us, our Church and our people who pray

for you, beseeching the Lord to grant you good health.

‘The long presence of the Antiochian representation in Moscow is a true witness of very good relations between the Churches of Russia and Antioch. The Russian Church, the Russian state and its people have shown a particular loving attention to our Church and our nation in the difficult situation in which Syria had fund itself recently.’

His Beatitude Patriarch John X presented Archbishop Nifon with a panagia in consideration of his work done for the strengthening of relations between the Orthodox Churches of Antioch and Russia.

Many Years was proclaimed to the Primates.

Patriarch John X venerated the relics of the church.

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