



Patriarch Irinej of Serbia venerates shrines in Moscow

On July 17, 2013, His Holiness Patriarch Irinej of Serbia, while on a peace visit to the Russian Orthodox Church, visited shrines and holy places in Moscow.

His delegation includes Metropolitan Amfilohije of Montenegro and the Seaside, Bishop Longin of Nova Gracanica, Central and Western America, Bishop Irinej of Backa, Bishop Feodosije of Raska-Prizren, Archimandrite Arsenije of Zica Monastery, Prof. Archpriest Radomir Popovic of the University of Belgrade Department of Theology, Archpriest Goiko Perovic, rector of St. Peter of Cetinje's Seminary, Protodeacon Radomir Percevic of the Cathedral Church of St. Michael in Belgrade, and Deacon Alexander Sekulic, Cabinet of the Patriarch of Serbia.

His Holiness Irinej is also accompanied by Bishop Savva of Voskresensk, abbot of the New Monastery of our Saviour, and Bishop Antony of Moravici, dean of Moscow representation of the Serbian Orthodox Church.

In the church of St. Nicholas-in-Tolmachi, His Holiness was welcomed by Archpriest Nikolay Krechetov, dean of the Moskvoretsy District, and the clergy of the church. Patriarch Irinej venerated the Icon of Our Lady of Vladimir. He was told about the history of the icon and other shrines in the Church. Patriarch Irinej was presented with an album on the icons 'The Faces of Christ'.

After that the Serbian delegation came to the New Monastery of Our Saviour. At the gates they were welcomed by the brethren and numerous faithful. His Holiness Irinej visited the church of St. Roman the Melodist with its burial vault of the Romanov boyars. At the grave of the venerable Grand Duke Sergey Aleksandrovich, the delegation sang 'Eternal Memory' to him. The abbot of the monastery, Bishop Savva of Voskresensk, introduced the delegation to the details about the burial vault of members of the imperial family and showed them the exhibits of the church's museum.

Then His Holiness Irinej proceeded to the monastery's Cathedral of the Holy Transfiguration to venerate the Icon of Our Lady the Queen of All, which is a venerated copy of the old miracle-working icon painted especially for Russia in Vatopedi Monastery on Mount Athos.

Before the All-Night Vigil, a thanksgiving was celebrated with a praise to St. Sergius of Radonezh.

After the thanksgiving, Bishop Savva greeted His Holiness Irinej, noting that the visit of the primate of the Serbian Church will go down in history of the monastery.

In his response, Patriarch Irinej said that it was his second visit to Moscow. He came to Moscow for the first time for the funeral of Patriarch Pimen in 1990. At that time, there was no access to many holy places and shrines in Moscow, he noted.

'The Serbian people suffered a great deal. For 500 years of the Turkish yoke, many monuments, beautiful icons, frescoes, churches, were destroyed. The last yoke came to the Serbian as well as Russian people with the ideology which declared that God was dead. Thank God, our faith has revived, and our soul has revived with it. Churches and monasteries have resumed their work. The most important thing is that our people have been able to restore churches in their souls and in their hearts', he said.

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