



Bishop George of Siemiatycze: His Holiness Patriarch Kirill's visit to Katyn became an important prologue to his primatial visit to Poland

On 15 July 2012, after the Divine Liturgy celebrated at the newly consecrated memorial Church of the Resurrection of Christ in Katyn near Smolensk and after a visit (by Patriarch Kirill) to the Russian and Polish memorial, Bishop George of Siemiatycze, Orthodox Ordinary of the Polish Army, speaking during a fraternal repast that followed, addressed His Holiness Patriarch Kirill of Moscow and All Russia with the following words of greeting:

“While in this sacred place, allow me, Your Holiness, to express once again my deep filial gratitude for this opportunity to meet with you and to pray together with you here, at the cemetery in the Katyn forest, and for your expression of respect for the dead, both Russian and Polish”, he said.

The Primate of the Russian Orthodox Church will visit Poland next month. Bishop George said that among numerous mass media representatives, who were in Katyn that day, there were those of the Polish TV channels who will cover the divine services and the Patriarchal visit to the memorial at the major Polish TV channels. “I believe it is very important in anticipation of your visit to Poland”, continued Bishop George.

Bishop George noted that the words the Primate of the Russian Church said about Katyn as a place of common grief and symbol of common tragedy for both the Russians and Poles made it possible to understand the nature of the forthcoming visit of His Holiness to Poland. According to Bishop George, it will be a visit of “the leader of the Russian Orthodox Church and of the entire Orthodoxy of Russia – a visit which brings peace” and bears witness to prayer as a source of reconciliation and love.

“Your Holiness, the meeting with you is the fulfillment of my youthful dream, - Bishop George said, - I have read much about you and I have always admired the way in which you performed your archpastoral ministry before and the way in which you perform your primatial ministry now. I would like to have at least some measure of your incredible strength, your wisdom and your power of prayer that could be felt so strongly during the Divine Liturgy today that I felt that the law of nature was upset. The Lord has granted to You, Your Holiness, great gifts and power of prayer.”

The Orthodox Ordinary of the Polish Army informed the gathering that immediately after his return from Russia, he would meet with His Beatitude Metropolitan Sawa of Warsaw and the Polish Minister of

Defense in order to tell them about his visit to Katyn: “I will try to convey all my impressions of this wonderful event and this celebration to His Beatitude and to the Minister of Defense who will convey this information to the leaders of our country.”

Source: <https://mospat.ru/en/news/53921/>