



## Russian Orthodox pilgrims venerate Byzantine shrines

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On May 19–24, 2012, Russian Orthodox pilgrims led by Metropolitan Sergiy of Voronezh and Borisoglebsk visited the Byzantine holy places in Turkey.

This pilgrimage was organized as part of the project renewing the old tradition of the Russian pilgrims' visits to the holy places in Asia Minor. His Holiness Patriarch Kirill of Moscow and All Russia and His Holiness Patriarch Bartholomew of Constantinople agreed upon this project during the official visit of Patriarch Kirill to the Church of Constantinople on July 4–6, 2009.

The Primate of the Church of Constantinople met with the pilgrims at his residence in Phanar. Metropolitan Sergiy of Voronezh and Borisoglebsk presented His Holiness Patriarch Bartholomew with the icon of St Mitrofan of Voronezh and a decorated Easter egg.

On 21 May, the commemoration day of St Apostle and Evangelist John the Theologian, Metropolitan Sergiy celebrated the Divine Liturgy in old Ephesus, in the church believed to be built on the place where St John was buried.

On 22 May, the feast of the Translation of the Holy Relics of St Nicholas the Wonderworker, Metropolitan Sergiy officiated at the Liturgy in the Lycian town of Myra (now Demre), the site of the ministry and death of St Nicholas. From Myra, his holy relics were transferred to Bari in Italy, where they are kept to this day.

On the feast of the Ascension of the Lord, Metropolitan Sergiy officiated at the Liturgy in the Church of St Alypius the Stylite (Patriarchate of Constantinople), web-site of the Voronezh diocese reports.