Centennial of the demise of St. Nicholas of Japan Equal-to-the-Apostles marked in Tokyo

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On February 16, 2012, a solemn divine service was held at the Cathedral of the Resurrection in Tokyo to mark the centennial of the demise of St. Nicholas of Japan Equal-to-the-Apostles. The cathedral is known more popularly as the Nikolai-do. Expressed in this name is respect of ordinary Japanese for the memory of Russia's great son who brought Orthodox faith to the islands of the Land of the Rising Sun.

Hieromonk Nikolay (Kasatkin) came to Japan in 1861 to serve as a priest at the Russian consulate in Hodata. A Russian Orthodox mission was established in 1870 in Japan. Father Nikolay became its leader in the rank of archimandrite and since 1880 as bishop of Revel, vicar of the diocese of Riga. Through his efforts, Holy Scriptures and the liturgical books were translated into Japanese, a seminary was established, primary schools for boys and girls, a library, an orphanage and other institutions were opened and the Church Messenger magazine in Japanese began to come out.

Bishop Nikolay passed in the Lord on February 3 (16), 1912. After his death, Emperor Maiji gave his permission to bury him within the city, at the Yanaka Cemetery. On April 10, 1970, Bishop Nikolay was canonized as a saint equal to the Apostles. The divine service in his honour was composed by Metropolitan Nikodim (Rotov) of Leningrad and Novgorod.

The Divine Liturgy at the cathedral on the commemorative day was led by Bishop Seraphim of Sendai. He was assisted by the rector of the Tokyo Representation of the Russian Orthodox Church, Archpriest Nikolay Katsyuban, and the clergy of the Japanese Autonomous Orthodox Church. After the dismissal, Metropolitan Daniel of Tokyo and All Japan addressed the congregation speaking about the magnificence of St. Nicholas's work to enlighten Japanese people with the light of the good news of Christ.

After that, the clergy led by bishops of the Japanese Church said a thanksgiving at the grave of St. Nicholas at the Yanaka Cemetery, and Bishop Seraphim said the lity for the deceased hierarchs of the Japanese Church who were buried there.

A reception was held at the church hall in the Resurrection Cathedral for those who came for the celebrations.

The celebrations devoted to the centennial of the demise of St. Nicholas Equal-to-the-Apostles will be

continued during the forthcoming visit to Japan by His Holiness Patriarch Kirill of Moscow and All Russia who is expected to come to Japan in September 2012.

DECR Communication Service

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