His Holiness Patriarch Kirill celebrates at Christ the Saviour Cathedral where relics of St. Catherine the Great Martyr will stay till December 4

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On 1 December 2010, the commemoration day of St. Philaret, Metropolitan of Moscow, His Holiness Patriarch Kirill of Moscow and All Russia, celebrated the Divine Liturgy at the Cathedral of Christ the Saviour.

Prior to the divine service, His Holiness Patriarch Kirill, bishops and clerics met the shrine with the relics of St. Catherine the Great Martyr brought to Moscow the day before from the Monastery of St. Catherine at Mt. Sinai.

Concelebrating with His Holiness were Metropolitan Varsonofiy of Saransk and Mordovia, chancellor of the Moscow Patriarchate; Metropolitan Hilarion, chairman of the Moscow Patriarchate's Department for External Church Relations; Metropolitans Feodosiy of Omsk and Tara, Nikolai of Izhevsk and Udmurtia, and Sofroniy of Cherkassy and Kanev; Archbishops Viktor of Tver and Kashin, Arseniy of Istra, Manuil of Petrozavodsk and Karelia, Tikhon of Novosibirsk and Berdsk, Vikentiy of Yekaterinburg and Verkhnyaya Tura, Maksimilian of Vologda and Velikiy Ustyug, Guriy of Zhitomir and Novograd-Volynsky, Onufriy of Izyum, and Mark of Yegorievsk; Bishops Irinarkh of Krasnogorsk, Leonid of Rechitsa, vicar bishops of the Moscow dioceses; archimandrite Alexy (Polikarpov), abbot of St. Daniel's Monastery; archimandrite Savva (Fateyev), abbot of St. Sabbas Monastery; archimandrite Zacchaeus (Wood), representative of the Orthodox Church in America; archpriest Vladimir Divakov, secretary for Moscow of His Holiness the Patriarch; archpriest Nikolai Balashov, deputy chairman of the DECR MP; archpriest Mikhail Ryazantsev, sacristan of the Cathedral of Christ the Saviour; hieromonk Antoniy (Sevryuk), head of the Patriarch's personal secretariat; as well as Moscow deans and clerics.

Praying at the sanctuary was Archbishop Damian of Sinai, Pharan and Raitho who brought the precious relics of St. Catherine to Moscow.

After the divine service, the Primate of the Russian Orthodox Church prayed at the relics of St. Philaret of Moscow and at the shrine with the relics of St. Catherine the Great Martyr.

His Holiness Patriarch Kirill greeted Archbishop Damian and the worshippers, telling them of the deeds of St. Catherine, and he called them to follow St. Philaret's example. His Holiness greeted several

archpastors with remarkable dates in their lives, conferred awards of the Russian Orthodox Church on them, and gave presents.

Archbishop Damian greeted His Holiness Patriarch Kirill of Moscow and All Russia. He emphasized that the fathers of Mt. Sinai were happy to meet the request made by Archbishop Vikentiy of Yekaterinburg and Verkhnyaya Tura with the blessing of His Holiness the Patriarch to bring a particle of the precious relics of St. Catherine the Great Martyr to Russia.

Archbishop Damian invited His Holiness Patriarch Kirill to visit the monastery "to revive relations between the Russian Orthodox Church and our Archbishopric that have been were strong from the earliest times."

Archbishop Damian mentioned a book about the holy sites and treasures of the Monastery at Mr. Sinai to be published together with the Publications Council of the Russian Orthodox Church. He is confident that this book, being published with the blessing of His Holiness Patriarch Kirill of Moscow and All Russia, will contribute to the strengthening of relations with the Moscow Patriarchate.

His Holiness Patriarch Kirill had a talk with the head of the Archbishopric of Sinai after the divine service. They discussed cooperation of the Russian Orthodox Church with the Monastery at Mt. Sinai, including pilgrimage.

At the fraternal repast, the Primate of the Russian Orthodox Church spoke about his visits to Mt. Sinai, including his first pilgrimage as an archimandrite made during military confrontation at the Sinai Peninsula.

Rev. Igor Yakimchuk, DECR secretary for Inter-Orthodox relations, attended the divine service at the Cathedral of Christ the Saviour.

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