



The Primate of the Russian Orthodox Church celebrates prayer service before miraculous icon of the Mother of God from Diveyevo

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On 22 November 2010, His Holiness Patriarch Kirill of Moscow and All Russia came to the Dormition Laura of the Caves in Kiev.

The abbot of the Laura Archbishop Pavel of Vyshgorod, clerics, and lay believers met His Holiness at the gates.

An altar was set under canopy at the square before the Cathedral of the Dormition. The miraculous icon of the Mother of God called "Lovingkindness" from Diveyevo that St. Seraphim kept at his cell was placed before the altar. His Holiness Patriarch Kirill brought the icon from Moscow towards His Beatitude Metropolitan Vladimir's jubilee.

His Holiness Patriarch Kirill of Moscow and All Russia, His Beatitude Metropolitan Christopher of the Czech Lands and Slovakia, and His Beatitude Metropolitan Vladimir of Kiev and All Ukraine celebrated a prayer service before the miraculous icon.

Metropolitan Vladimir greeted His Holiness Kirill, saying:

"All Ukrainian believers thank you for bringing here the "Lovingkindness" miraculous icon, praying before which was a great saint of God and of the Russian land, Seraphim, whose soul ascended to heaven before this very icon.

I would like to cordially greet you and say: Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. Come to us, lead us in prayer, give you primatial blessing to the believers so that all people could live in peace, harmony, and mutual love to which the Lord calls us. Pray for the removal of animosity from human hearts, pray to God to bestow patience and salvation on all who place their hopes on Him and glorify His name for ever."

The Primate of the Russian Orthodox Church said:

"I am happy to be set foot on the holy soil of Kiev and the Laura of the Caves, and to touch spiritually its holy sites. I thank God for an opportunity to bring here the miraculous icon of the Most Holy Mother of God called "Lovingkindness", "The Joy of All Joys," which St. Seraphim of Sarov kept in his cell, before which he prayed with tears and acquired a special power of Divine grace. After his demise, the icon was given to the convent in Diveyevo with his blessing.

"When a spacious refectory and cells were built at the Diveyevo convent during St. Seraphim's lifetime, he said: "The Great Lady will settle here." The nuns thought that a noble person would come here to take the veil or just to live here and support the convent. St. Seraphim died, and no noble person came...

"It was revealed, however, that St. Seraphim had intended to place the miraculous icon in the new spacious cell. The nuns received it with deep piety and kept it until the fearsome years of theomachism came. When the convent was threatened with closure and devastation, the nuns took the icon and hid it in the house in the town of Murom where they settled. During all awesome years of struggle against God, when many holy sites had been destroyed in Russia, this icon stayed peacefully in a nun's cell. As the last nun felt that her days were about to end, she gave the icon to a pious archpriest from Ryazan, and he kept it unbeknown to anybody.

"It was only when all dangers were over, the icon was given to Patriarch Alexy of Moscow and All Russia. Since then it has been kept in the centre of the Russian Orthodox Church, where the Patriarch works, prays and lives.

"It is for the first time that we take the icon out of Moscow. I am happy that we brought it to Ukraine, to the Laura of the Caves in Kiev in connection with the 75th birthday of His Beatitude Metropolitan Vladimir.

"Let us pray under the Protecting Veil of the Heavenly Queen and before Her miraculous icon for good health of His Beatitude, his long life and physical strength. Let us pray for the unity of bishops, clergymen and laymen of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church. Let us pray for what His Beatitude said – for peace and overcoming of enmity and disorders, and for the assuaging of sorrows so that the Ukrainian people lead peaceful life in Orthodox faith, piety and purity under the Protecting Veil of the Heavenly Queen."

The Divine service was broadcast at the website of the Dormition Laura of the Caves in Kiev, press service of the Patriarch of Moscow and All Russia reports.