Russian Orthodox pilgrims sing praise at Icon of Our Lady of Iveron on Mount Athos

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On October 26, 2010, the Day of the Icon of Our Lady of Iveron, the Russian Orthodox Church's pilgrims group led by Metropolitan Hilarion, DECR chairman, visited the Iveron Monastery on Mouth Athos.

The Iveron Monastery is the third in honour on Mount Athos. It was founded in the late 10th century by Sts John, Euthymius and George, natives of Iberia. Georgian monks lived there since that time till the last of them died in 1955. Now there are only Greek monks in it.

At the gates the guests were welcomed by the abbot, Archimandrite Nathanael. The delegation proceeded to the place where the former gates used to be and where the Iveron Icon of the Heavenly Queen called 'the Keeper of the Gates' is found.

Metropolitan Hilarion led the group in singing the akathistos to the Most Holy Mother of God in the presence of numerous pilgrims.

After the service, the guests proceeded to the abbot's chambers, where they had a talk with Father Nathanael. He told them the history of the monastery, emphasizing its ties with the Russian Church through centuries. Addressing Metropolitan Hilarion, he said, 'I remember with warmth Your Eminence's visit, when you were a young hieromonk, back in 1992. At that time, being a young deacon, I had the joy of concelebrating the Divine Liturgy with you. I thank the Most Holy Lady that She has vouchsafed me to welcome you here now as an official representative of the Patriarch of Moscow. Our monastery and the Russian Orthodox Church are tied by age-old spiritual bonds. We know that the Russian Orthodox people honour the Iveron Icon of the Mother of God. We are happy that fifteen years ago we had an opportunity to participate in the mission which brought to Moscow a copy of this miracle-working icon we cherish so much.

Father abbot took his guests to the cathedral of the monastery, where they venerated the relics of the Holy Apostles Peter, Luke and Bartholomew, St George the Martyr, Sts Basil the Great, John Chrysostom and Athanasius the Great, Sts Cosmos and Damian the Silverless and St. Theodore Stratelates.

Then the delegation of the Russian Orthodox Church went to the Great Laura of St Athanasius of Athos, the main and the largest monastery on Mount Athos. On their way, the pilgrims stopped at the Spring of St. Athanasius, which he broke through a rock at the Mother of God’s command.

DECR Communication Service

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