Archbishop Justinian of Naro-Fominsk participates in meeting with Patriarch Bartholomew of Constantinople as member of Bishops' Assembly of North and Central America delegation

On September 21, 2010, a group of leaders of the Bishops' Assembly of North and Central America was received in audience by His Holiness Patriarch Bartholomew of Constantinople at his residence at Fanar in Istanbul, Turkey.

The delegation included Archbishop Demetrios of the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese in America, president of the Bishops' Assembly; Archbishop Justinian of Naro-Fominsk, vice-president of the assembly, administrator of the Moscow Patriarchate parishes in the USA ; Bishop Basil of Wichita and Central America, Patriarchate of Antioch, secretary of the assembly; and Archbishop Anthony of Hierapolis, Ukrainian Orthodox Church in the USA, Patriarchate of Constantinople, treasurer of the assembly.

They were invited to Fanar by Patriarch Bartholomew who wished to discuss the results of the first plenary meeting of the assembly which took place on May 26-28 in New York and to exchange opinions on the ways of its further work, the Moscow Patriarchate Parishes' press service reported on September 21.

In his introductory remarks, Patriarch Bartholomew noted the great role that inter-Orthodox Bishops' Assemblies convened in all regions of the world today are called to play in bearing witness to the true unity of Local Orthodox Churches before the world. He also noted that, unlike the previous regional inter-Orthodox organizations, the idea of convening the present Bishops' Assemblies was born at the meeting of the Heads of Local Orthodox Church in October 2008 in Istanbul and was elaborated in detail by the 4th Pan-Orthodox Pre-Council Conference in June 2009 in Chambesy, Switzerland.

In the course of the talk, Archbishop Justinian said that, having arrived for service in the USA only recently, he immediately felt a spirit of individualism cultivated in the secular American society, which, penetrating the milieu of Orthodox believers, made a sad dividing impact. In this connection, the archbishop expressed hope that the work of the Bishops' Assembly of North and Central America would help overcome and prevent such developments.

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