



Patriarch Kirill begins his visit to Solovki monastery of Transfiguration

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On August 19, 2010, His Holiness Patriarch Kirill of Moscow and All Russia arrived for a primatial visitation to the Solovki Islands.

He is accompanied by Metropolitan Varsonofy of Saransk and Mordovia, chancellor of the Moscow Patriarchate, Metropolitan Hilarion of Volokolamsk, head of the department for external church relations, Bishop Sergiy of Solnechnogorsk, head of the administrative secretariat, Archpriest Vsevolod Chaplin, head of the Synodal department for church-society relations, Mr. V. Legoida, head of the Synodal information departments, and Rev. Antony Sevryuk, head of the patriarchal personal secretariat.

At the Solovki airport His Holiness was met by A. Beglov, deputy head of the Presidential Administration, Arkhangelsk regional governor I. Mikhalechuk, Archbishop Feognost of Sergiev Posad chairman of the Synodal commission for monasteries, Bishop Tikhon of Arkhangelsk and Kholmogory, Archimandrite Porfiry Shutov, abbot of the Solovki Monastery, and members of the Patrons Board for the restoration of the monastery. The welcoming party also included local people and schoolchildren clothed in traditional costumes of the Russian North.

‘It is my second visit to the Solovki as Archimandrite of the Solovki Stauropegial Monastery for celebrations in this famous Russian cloister’, His Holiness said to journalists, adding, ‘For the first time in the history of the Solovki, there will be two episcopal consecrations here, which is a testimony to the growing role of the Solovki Stauropegial Monastery in church life today’.

‘Beside’, he said, ‘there will be a meeting of the special commission for the restoration of the Solovki, which I am to chair. We will think about a further development of the archipelago and the restoration work to be carried out as soon as possible so that the primordial beauty of this place could be revealed’.

At the holy gates, His Holiness was met by the brethren of the monastery and pilgrims. His Holiness proceeded to the monastery’s Cathedral of the Holy Transfiguration to venerate the relics of Sts Zosima, Savvatiy and Herman of the Solovki.

Addressing those who assembled in the church, Patriarch Kirill described the Solovki as ‘one of the spiritual capitals of our homeland’. The Solovki, he said, ‘is not a periphery but a Patriarchal Stauropegial Monastery renowned for its past and present’.

Then Patriarch Kirill saw the reverence cross erected on Transfiguration Square and a small exposition devoted to the Solovki carvers.

Patriarchia.ru/DECR Communication Service

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