



DECR vice-chairman on working visit to Estonia

Hegumen Philip Riabykh, vice-chairman of the Moscow Patriarchate's department for external church relations, was on a working visit to Estonia from August 12 to 15, 2010.

On the first day of his visit, he was received by the head of the Estonian Orthodox Church, Metropolitan Kornily of Tallinn and All Estonia. Participating in the meeting was also Mr. Evan Tudeberg, honorary consul of the Slovak Republic, who presented Metropolitan Kornily with documents from his family archives concerning the work of Archbishop Nikolay (Leisman) of Pechery. Among the documents were photographs of the Orthodox episcopate and clergy who served in the Baltic countries in the 1930s.

The DECR vice-chairman had a meeting in the Estonian Parliament with parliament members Ain Seppik, Toomas Varek and Vladimir Velman who is also member of the Inter-Parliamentary Assembly of Orthodoxy.

In the consistory of the Estonian Evangelical Lutheran Church, Hegumen Philip had a talk with Assessor Dean **Tiit Salumjæ** and Chancellor **Mati Maanas** concerning the long-standing cooperation between the Orthodox Christians and the Lutherans both in Estonia and Russia. They stressed the importance of continuing this cooperation for promoting good relation between the people in the two countries and for defending the Christian identity in Europe and the world.

Later that day Hegumen Philip had working meetings with Minister for Social Affairs Hanno Pevkur, Foreign Minister Urmas Paet, and Tiit Vjahi, chairman of the board of directors of the Estonian Major Entrepreneurs' Association.

The DECR vice-chairman also visited the Center of Russian Culture and met with its director Yu. Poljakov. A municipal institution in Tallinn, the center carries out broad activities to support and develop Russian culture and spiritual and cultural relations with Russia.

On Sunday, Hegumen Philip celebrated the Divine Liturgy at the Pukhtitsy Convent. After the service he met with the abbess Varvara (Trofimova) to say many happy returns to her on the occasion of her coming 80th birthday.

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