Moscow mayor receives Athonite monks

Moscow Mayor Yuri Luzhkov received on 1 July 2010 a group of monks from Holy Mount Athos led by Archimandrite Simeon from Dionysiou Monastery. Participating in the meeting were Moscow city officials and Hegumen Nikon Smirnov, rector of the Moscow representation of St. Panteleimon's Monastery on Mouth Athos.

The Athonite monks arrived in Russia to participate in the celebrations marking the 300th anniversary of Tsarskoye Selo and to consecrate there the restored church of the Holy Protomartyr Catherine. They brought over for St. Catherine's Cathedral a copy of the miracle-working Icon of the Mother of God the Prodromitissa kept in the Romanian secluded monastery Prodrom on Mount Athos.

After the celebrations in St. Petersburg the delegation visited Moscow since early in June the Moscow Mayor made a pilgrimage to Mount Athos and was given a warm welcome by the Athonite community.

During the meeting Mr. Luzhkov informed the monks that the Moscow Government would help restore the Old Russik, the oldest Russian monastery on Athos. The Old Russik was abandoned for a long time and now needs urgent restoration.

Mr. Luzhkov assured his guests that all the necessary works to restore the monastery would be completed shortly.

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