



## **Patriarch Kirill holds thanksgiving at Russian Orthodox Church Cairo Representation**

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On April 11, 2010, during his visit to the Orthodox Church of Alexandria, His Holiness Patriarch Kirill of Moscow and All Russia together with His Beatitude Pope and Patriarch Theodore II of Alexandria and All Africa visited the Russian Orthodox Church Representation in Cairo and held a solemn service of thanksgiving at the church of the Holy Protomartyr Dimitrius of Thessaloniki.

The church was overcrowded with parishioners, among them Russians living in Egypt, schoolchildren of the Russian Embassy's school, the embassy staff, benefactors and numerous guests.

The thanksgiving celebrated in the Easter rite was led by Patriarch Kirill. Patriarch Theodore worshipped standing at the patriarchal place.

Present at the service were also Hegumen Leonid Gorbachev, representative of the Patriarch of Moscow to the Patriarch of Alexandria, Russian ambassador to Egypt M. Bogdanov and diplomats from other countries.

After the service, Patriarch Kirill addressed himself to the Patriarch of Alexandria with these words:

Your Beatitude, today we celebrated the Divine Liturgy together at the patriarchal cathedral of Alexandria and had an opportunity for communion at the holy Cup. This communion in prayer just as human communication which we have had in continuous talks with each other reaffirm my clear understanding that the Orthodox Churches of Alexandria and Russia, united by a long history of fellowship, enjoy today especially close, fraternal and cordial relations. Through this fellowship we mutually strengthen and support each other. When Churches are together the joy they experience is multiplied becoming twice as strong, while experiencing trials and hardships their sorrow is divided into two.

Your Beatitude's Moscow Representation led by the Most Reverend Archbishop Athanasios of Cyrene is a very important link between our Churches, as is our Representation here in Cairo led by Father Leonid. Both Representations have done much to bring our two nations closer together and to strengthen friendship and fellowship between our two Churches.

And they do another important thing – they take pastoral care of our peoples. The number of our

Orthodox brothers and sisters of the Greek origin in Moscow is growing today, and the Church of Alexandria Representation is a place where they are spiritually nourished, where they pray and through prayer enter into communion with their Churches. The same service is carried out by the Moscow Patriarchate Representation in Cairo – this magnificence church which unites many people who have come to Egypt from various countries and who are faithful of the Russian Orthodox Church.

Then Patriarch Kirill addressed the congregation and guests of the Moscow Patriarchate Representation in Cairo, saying,

I would like to greet you all, my dear brother and sisters! I rejoice seeing your faces; I rejoice in the fact that you have an opportunity to come to a church in which the liturgy is celebrated in Church Slavonic and to be immersed in the habitual atmosphere of a Russian Orthodox church. I rejoice in the fact that this church has been restored and many of you have worked to make it so beautiful.

It is very important to come to a church of God. It is not always easy as the city is large and the traffic in it is complicated and each of you is busy, but it is important to remember that it is in a church that God's grace touches us in a special way; here the Lord especially clearly hears our prayers because He himself said: where two or three come together in my name, there am I with them (Mt. 18:20). Come to the church of God, pray, make confession and partake of the Holy Gifts of Christ, educate your children in the Orthodox faith!

Our people, who went through severe trials in the 20<sup>th</sup> century and the most terrible trial of godlessness, are well aware of the power of faith. If people renounce God they cannot be successful but when they combine prayer and labour success accompanies them.

I wanted to come to this church of God and to meet you in order to support every one of you on your way to God. We believe and know for sure that it is only in communion with God that a person finds the fullness of life. May the Lord preserve each of you through the intercession of St. Mark, the founder of the Church of Alexandria, and through the intercession of Holy Protomartyr Dimitrius. God grant this parish peace, fortitude and friendship!

In recognition of his longstanding all-round support of the Russian Orthodox Church and its Cairo Representation, Patriarch Kirill awarded Ambassador M. Bogdanov the Order of St. Sergius of Radonezh.

He expressed special gratitude to Father Leonid Gorbachev, rector of the Cairo Representation, for his pastoral efforts, restoration work and activities as Moscow Patriarchate Representative to the Patriarch of Alexandria. Father Leonid has been awarded the Order of St. Daniel of Moscow and elevated to the

rank of archimandrite.

*DECR Communication Service*

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