



His Holiness Patriarch Bartholomew concelebrates prayer service with pilgrims from the Russian Orthodox Church at St. George's church of the Patriarchate of Constantinople

A group of pilgrims led by the Moscow Patriarchate secretary for Institutions Abroad, Bishop Mark of Yegorievsk, is visiting the Christian holy places in Turkey. The pilgrimage, blessed by His Holiness Patriarch Kirill of Moscow and All Russia, was organized by the Pilgrims' Centre of the Moscow Patriarchate.

The group consists of 71 clerics and laymen, including Bishop Serafim of Bobruisk and Bykhov; Rev. Sergiy Malashkin, rector of the Church of the Iberian Icon of the Mother of God in the village of Yubileinoe (Minsk diocese of the Belorussian Exarchate); Very Rev. Alexander Kulikov, rector of the Church of the Kazan Icon of the Mothers of God in the town of Ustyuzhna (Vologda diocese).

On 16 December 2009, the Divine Liturgy was celebrated at St. Georgy's Church of the Patriarchate of Constantinople. His Holiness Patriarch Bartholomew of Constantinople concelebrated a prayer service with the clerics of the Moscow Patriarchate, official website of the Pilgrims' Centre reports.

His Holiness Bartholomew greeted the pilgrims after the divine service.

That same day the Primate of the Orthodox Church of Constantinople had a talk with Bishop Mark of Yegorievsk and Bishop Seraphim of Bobruisk and Bykhov.

The seven-day-long pilgrimage will be completed on December 21. The pilgrims will visit the St. Sophia in Constantinople (Istanbul) and the Church of the Most Holy Mother of God in Ephesus. The hierarchal divine service will be celebrated at the Church of St. Nicholas the Wonder-Worker in Myra in Lycia (Demre).