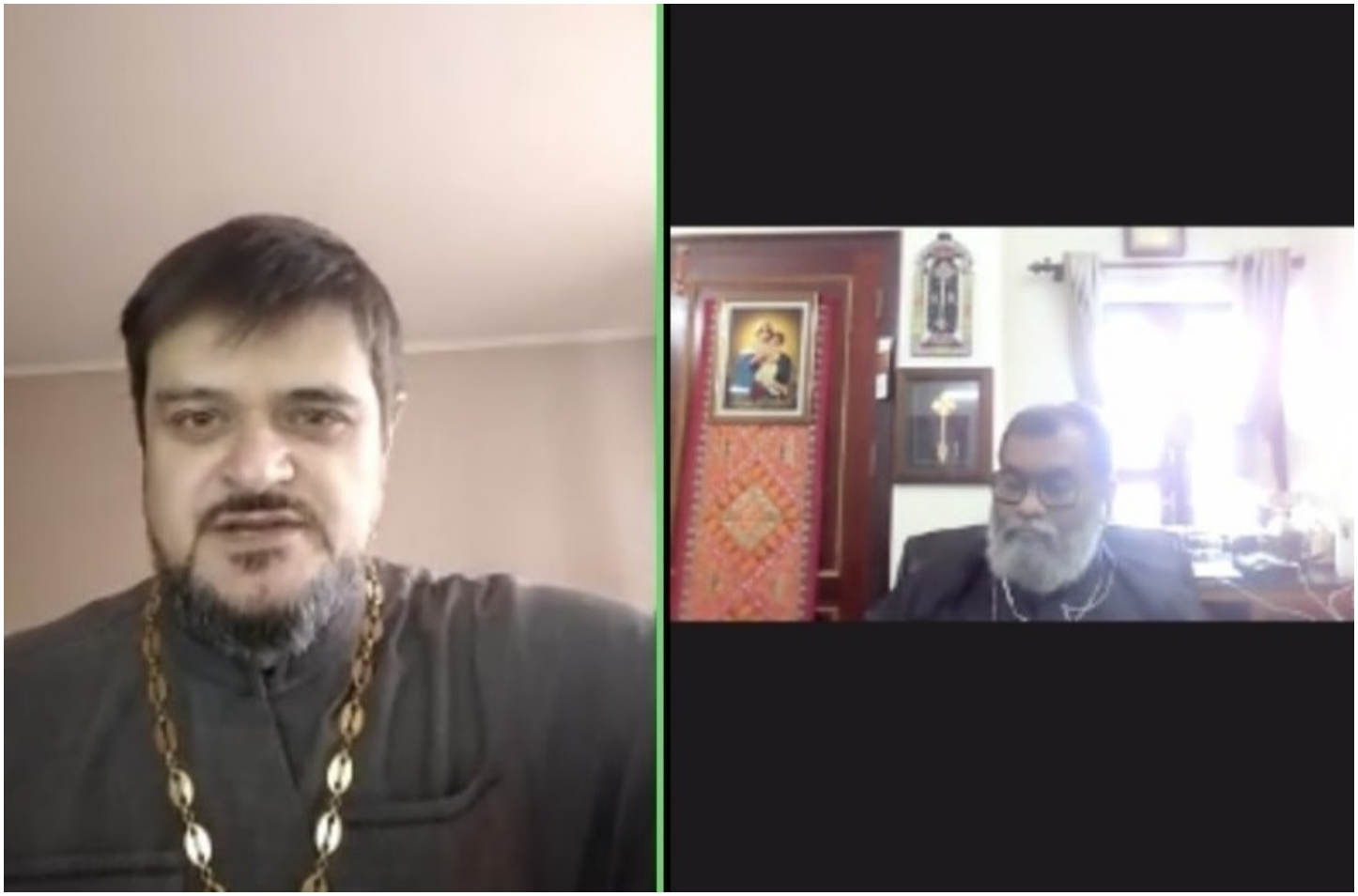
Working Group for bilateral relations between Russian Orthodox Church and Malankara Church holds online session



On March 3, 2021, the Working Group for coordinating bilateral relations between the Russian Orthodox Church and the Malankara Church held the online session.

Taking part in the session on behalf of the Russian Orthodox Church were Hieromonk Stefan (Igumnov), secretary for inter-Christian relations of the Moscow Patriarchate's Department for External Church Relations (DECR); and hieromonk Petr (Akhmatkhanov), staff member of the DECR.

Representing the Malankara Church were Rev. Abraham Thomas, secretary of the Department of Ecumenical Relations, and Rev. Aswin Zefrin Fernandis, head of the protocol service.

Hieromonk Stefan conveyed the words of sympathy and support from His Holiness Patriarch Kirill of Moscow and All Russia and Metropolitan Hilarion of Volokolamsk, the DECR chairman, to Catholicos

Baselios Marthoma Paulose II who has been diagnosed withCOVID-19. The Primate of the Malankara Church is being treated at a hospital in the Indian state of Kerala. His condition is described as satisfactory.

Discussed at the session were issues concerning the implementation of joint projects agreed upon at the first session of the Working Group held in Kottayam, the Indian state of Kerala; the results of the remote cooperation between the Russian Orthodox Church and the Makankara Church during the pandemic were summed up.

Cooperation between the DECR and the India News Agency ‘Orthodoxy Cognate Page’ (OCP) operating under the auspice of the Malankara Church was a result of the interchurch dialogue. Joint projects aimed for the support of persecuted Christians in some African countries were considered important. Named among them were programs set up to describe the situation in Ethiopia and an international online conference ‘On the Plight of Christians in Africa” held on the initiative of the Russian Orthodox Church and the Russian Association for Protection of Religious Freedom at the venue of Rossiya Segodnya Media Group on December 22, 2020, in which the OCP representatives took part.

During the online session, the members of the Working Group agreed to continue cooperation in the media sphere, for instance, in translating films about traditions and contemporary life of the Russian Orthodox Church and the Malankara Church into Russian, Hindu and the Malayalam languages and showing them in Russia and India. Members of the group confirmed their intention to implement bilateral projects adjourned due to the quarantine restrictions. Also discussed were other issues pertaining to prospects for cooperation during the current year.

The spread of the coronavirus in the world notwithstanding, the Russian Orthodox Church continues its active cooperation with the Ancient Oriental Churches at the level of the DECR, working groups and bilateral commissions.

DECR Communication Service

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