Members of Commission for Dialogue between Russian Orthodox Church and Coptic Church hold online meeting



On 12th April 2021, members of the Commission for Dialogue between the Russian Orthodox Church and the Coptic Church held an online meeting.

Representing the Russian Orthodox Church were Bishop Gennady of Kaskelen, the Commission co-chairman; Hieromonk Stefan (Igumnov), secretary for inter-Christian relations of the Moscow Patriarchate's Department for External Church Relations (DECR), the Commission secretary; and Mr. Sergei Alfyorov, DECR staff member. Taking part in the meeting on behalf of the Coptic Church were Metropolitan Serapion of Los Angeles, the Commission co-chairman; and Bishop Kyrillos, Auxiliary Bishop of the Diocese of Los Angeles and Dean of Ss Athanasius and Cyril Coptic Orthodox Theological School, the Commission secretary.

The participants in the meeting discussed prospects for implementing in 2021 the joint projects planned during the Commission's last session on 27th – 31st May 2019 in Cairo, but postponed because of the pandemic, and summed up interim results of the Commission's work in 2020.

Despite a number of serious restrictions that forced the Commission to continue its work remotely,

several important initiatives were successfully implemented in 2020. In particular, in summer 2020, in compliance with the agreements achieved in 2017 between His Holiness Patriarch Kirill of Moscow and All Russia, His Holiness Patriarch Tawadros II of the Coptic Church and President of Russia Vladimir Putin, 14 students from Egypt were admitted to the universities in Moscow, Rostov-on-Don, Oryol, Kazan and Tumen. In September, with the assistance of the DECR and the Legal Administration of the Moscow Patriarchate, the first parish of the Coptic Church in the territory of Russia obtained state registration as a legal entity. In December, Patriarch Tawadros II delivered a keynote speech at an online conference “On the Situation of Christians in Africa” organised by the DECR and the Russian Association for Protection of Religious Freedom.

Gradual stabilisation of the epidemiological situation allowed to resume official visits in spring 2021. Several days ago, a delegation of hegumens, abbots and monks from the Ukrainian Orthodox Church’s monasteries visited Egypt. The delegation was led by Metropolitan Arseny of Svyatogorsk, abbot of the Holy Dormition Lavra in Svyatogorsk. On a visit to Egypt was also a film crew of Spas TV channel working on a new documentary about the places of pilgrimage in Egypt associated with the Holy Family.

The Commission members expressed their hope for further opportunities to reinvigorate cooperation and for the implementation of a number of scheduled projects as the vaccination of population in Russia and Egypt continues and regular flights have been resumed.

The participants in the meeting confirmed their willingness to hold the Commission’s next regular session this year. According to the rotation principle, it is due to take place in the territory of the Russian Orthodox Church.

DECR Communication Service

Source: https://mospat.ru/en/news/86983/