Antiochian Orthodox Church receives Russian ‘Sputnik-V’



On 25th June 2021, a consignment of the Russian ‘Sputnik-V’ vaccine was delivered to Lebanon with the blessing of His Holiness Patriarch Kirill of Moscow and All Russia and with assistance of the Moscow Patriarchate’s Department for External Church Relations.

Meeting the relief consignment at the Beirut-Rafic Hariri International Airport were Archimandrite Romanos (Hannat), abbot of Our Lady of Balamand Patriarchal Monastery; Archimandrite Philipp (Vasiltsev), rector of the Representation of the Russian Orthodox Church in Beirut; Consul Ruslan Mamayev of the Russian Federation to the Lebanese Republic, and a delegation of the University of Balamand.

That same day the Russian vaccine was brought to the centre of vaccination at the University of

Balamand with the blessing of His Beatitude John X, Patriarch of Antioch and All the East.

On July 1, a handover ceremony took place at the University of Balamand. Attending were Archimandrite Romanos (Hannat); Archimandrite Jack (Khalil), dean of the Institute of Theology of the University of Balamand; Archimandrite Philipp (Vasiltsev); H.E. Alexander Rudakov, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Russian Federation to the Lebanese Republic; Dr. Elias Warrak, President of the University of Balamand, authorities of the University; members of the Board of Trustees, representatives of the Lebanese and Russian mass media, and many guests. Dr. Warrak greeted those gathered and told them about the University, its activities, principles of organization, curricula, and the number of institutes and students.

The guests visited the University of Balamand's centre of vaccination where vaccination by 'Sputnik-V' will take place.

At a briefing given to the Lebanese and Russia mass media, the President of the University expressed his gratitude for the vaccine that corresponds to the medical and international standards. Dr. Warrrak added that "vaccination at the medical centre will be held according to plan and in full conformity with the mandated rules."

H.E. Alexander Rudakov said that this gift "has shown care for the Lebanese people and the Orthodox community, and testified to the continuing cooperation between the Russian and Antiochian Orthodox Churches in Lebanon and in Syria based on mutual respect."

Mr. Farid Makari, the former deputy speaker of Parliament, who was among those attending the ceremony, underscored in his talk with the journalists: "We are grateful for this long-awaited and long-desired gift from such a great Orthodox country as Russia. Lebanon is undergoing a hard time in its history and needs aid, and Russia is rendering us necessary and different kinds of assistance. Also important for us is the role Russia is playing in the search for a way out of the current political and economic crisis."

Members of the Russian-speaking Orthodox community living in Lebanon can get vaccination at the University of Balamand's centre of vaccination, the Representation of the Russian Orthodox Church in Beirut informs.

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