Monastic delegation from Egypt visits the Metropolitan of St. Petersburg and Valamo



From August 29 to 31, 2021, a delegation of abbots and monks of the Coptic Church, in the course of their pilgrimage to Russia, visited the Metropolis of St. Petersburg and the Valamo Monastery of the Holy Transfiguration.

In the evening of August 28, the delegation arrived in St. Petersburg. At the New Maiden's Convent in Voskresensk they were received by Metropolitan Varsonofy of St. Petersburg and Ladoga, vicar of the Metropolis of St. Petersburg, Bishop Siluan of Petergof, rector of St. Petersburg Theological Academy, and Sister Sophia (Silina), mother superior of the Novodevichy Convent. Participating in the meeting were Hieromonk Stephen (Igumnov), secretary for inter-Christian relations, Department for External Church Relations; Hieromonk Daud el-Antoni, representative of the Coptic Church in Russia; Rev. Vyacheslav Zavalny, adviser, St. Petersburg branch of the DECR; and Hierodeacon Peter (Akhmatkhanov), DECR staff member.

In the course of his long talk with the guests, the head of the Metropolis of St. Petersburg told them about its history and the present church life of the northern capital city. Metropolitan Varsonofy

mentioned the visit made by Patriarch Tawadros II to Russia in November 2012. His Eminence also answered numerous questions form the guests about the present state and monastic traditions of the Russian Orthodox Church. Sister Sophia spoke about peculiarities of the order of Russian convents and took the delegation on a tour of the Novodevichy Convent.

On August 29, the delegation from Egypt arrived on Valamo Island. In the Valamo Monastery of the Holy Transfiguration, the Coptic monks were welcomed by its abbot Bishop Pankraty of Troitsk. The guests proceeded to the Cathedral of the Holy Transfiguration and venerated the relics of its founders, Ss Sergius and Herman of Valamo, at the lower church, as well as the Valamo wonder-working Icon of the Mother of God. At the monastery hostel, a talk was held with Bishop Pankraty.

On the same day, the guests visited the Skete of All Saints and the Skete of Our Lady of Smolensk. In the Skete of Our Lady of Smolensk, the pilgrims and the skete's spiritual father Hegumen David (Legeida) had a long talk. The brethren of the monastery showed a keen interest in the life of the Coptic Church, the feat of her new martyrs and the spiritual traditions of Coptic monasteries.

On August 30 and 31, the delegation visited the sketes of St Elias, the Resurrection, Gethsemane, and St. Vladimir, as well as the Holy Island with its skete of St. Alexander of Svir.

The guests were shown the monastery farm, saw the Valamo orchards, a cheese dairy and a dairy farm.

In the morning of September 1, the delegation returned to Moscow. In the evening, the delegation departed for Cairo. At the Domodedovo international airport, the guests from Egypt were seen off by Metropolitan Feognost of Kashira, head of the Synodal department for monasteries and monkhood; Hieromonk Stephan (Igumnov); and Hieromonk Daud el-Antoni, representative of the Coptic Church in Russia.

The delegation of abbots and monks of the Coptic Church's monasteries included His Grace Bishop Bigol, Abbot of the Elmeharic Monastery in Asyut – head of the delegation; His Grace Bishop Sawerous, Abbot of the St. Tomas & St. Baktor Monastery in El Khataba; His Grace Bishop Metawas, Abbot of the St. Virgin Mary Mountain Monastery in Akhmim; His Grace Bishop Aghabios, Regent of the St. Bishoy the Great Monastery in Wadi El Natrun; His Grace Bishop Mekhail, General Vicar in Cairo; Rev. Hieromonk Kyrillos Anba Bishoy, Secretary to His Holiness Pope and Patriarch Tawadros II (St. Bishoy Monastery in Wadi El Natrun); Rev. Hieromonk Tawadros Elmoharraqy, Elmeharic Monastery in Asyut; Rev. Hieromonk Dawoud El Antony, Representative of the Coptic Orthodox Church in the Russian Federation; Monk Macarius El Thomasy, St. Tomas & St. Baktor Monastery in El Khataba; Monk Youssef El Akhmimy, St. Virgen Mary Mountain Monastery in Akhmim; Monk Botros El Makary, St. Macarius the Great Monastery in Wadi El Natrun; Monk Zeus El Makary, St. Macarius the Great Monastery in Wadi El Natrun; Monk Mercurius El Makary, St. Macarius the Great Monastery in Wadi El Natrun; Monk Mercurius El Makary, St. Macarius the Great Monastery in Wadi El Natrun; Monk Markos El Makari, monk of St Macarius the Great Monastery; Dr. Anton Milad, Special Representative of the Coptic Orthodox Patriarchate.

DECR Communication Service

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