Moscow Patriarchate parishioners from Turkey on pilgrimage to the Holy Land



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Parishioners of the Moscow Patriarchate communities in the Republic of Turkey made a pilgrimage to the Holy Land fr om September 30 to October 7 with the blessing of Metropolitan Antony of Volokolamsk, chairman of the Moscow Patriarchate's Department for External Church Relations.

On October 1, the pilgrims came to the historic part of Jerusalem – the Old City. According to tradition, they walked the Way of the Cross which leads from the Praetorium wh ere Jesus was condemned by Pontius Pilate to the place of Christ's death on Calvary. At the stations they listened to Gospel passages related to the last hours of the Saviour on the earth read by Rev. Georgy Sergeyev, who led the group,

and to historical explanations given by the guide.

The pilgrims venerated the Holy Sepulchre and on the night of October 2 attended the Divine Liturgy there. Officiating was Archbishop Theophanes of Gerasa with the blessing of His Beatitude Patriarch Theophilos III of Jerusalem. Rev. Georgy Sergeyev, responsible for taking pastoral care of the Moscow Patriarchate faithful in the territory of the Republic of Turkey, and Rev. Alexey Golovin, who takes pastoral care of the community in Antalya, concelebrated. Liturgical hymns were sung by the choir and the pilgrims in the Greek and Church Slavonic languages.

On October 4, the pilgrims attended the Divine Liturgy at the Basilica of the Nativity, the birthplace of Jesus Christ.

The pilgrimage continued with the visits to Galilee, the metochion of the Russian Ecclesiastical Mission in Hebron, the baptism site of Jesus Christ on the bank of the Jordan River, St. Sabbas the Sanctified Monastery, the Monastery on the Mount of Temptation, and Gorny Convent in Ein Karem.

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