Metropolitan Anthony of Volokolamsk consecrated icon for the church of the Holy Spirit in Mongolia



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On December 19, the commemoration day of St. Nicholas the Wonderworker, Archbishop of Myra in Lycia, Metropolitan Anthony of Volokolamsk, chairman of the Department for External Church Relations of the Moscow Patriarchate, celebrated the Divine Liturgy at the church of the Nativity of John the Precursor-in-Presnya in Moscow.

He was assisted by Rev. Anthony Gusev, rector of the stavropegial church of the Holy Trinity in Ulan-Bator, Mongolia, and the clergy of the Parish of St. John the Precursor - Archpriest Dionisy Lobov, Rev. Alexy Vorontsov, Deacons Yevgeny Kuznetsov, Sergiy Bobrov and Nikolay Vasin.

The liturgical hymns were sung by the festive choir conducted by Ms. T.M. Vorontsova.

During the Prayer of Fervent Supplication, Metropolitan Anthony lifted up a prayer for the restoration of peace and for inmates of penitentiaries.

Following the Prayer after Holy Communion, Father Alexy read out the message from His Holiness Patriarch Kirill of Moscow and All Russia on the Day of Mercy and Compassion for All Those in Prison.

Following the Dismissal, the praise to St. Nicholas the Wonderworker was offered, after which Metropolitan Anthony blessed a copy of the Icon of the Theotokos Prodromitissa.

The original copy of the venerated icon was painted on Holy Mount Athos in the 19th century as a blessing for the Orthodox faithful who live on Mongolia. There is an inscription at the back of the icon, 'Gratis … to all who are Russian and Orthodox… or to the future magnificent church in Ugra' (the historical name of Ulan-Bator). At present it is kept at the National Museum of Buryatia.

Through the efforts of A. V. Gordeyev, vice-speaker of the Russian State Duna, and Rev. Antony Gusev, a new copy of the icon was made. After its consecration the icon will be brought to Irkutsk to be then brought to Ulan-Bator through Buryatia.

After the liturgy, Metropolitan Anthony warmly greeted Rev. Antony and congratulated him on the significant event in the life of the only Moscow Patriarchate's parish in Mongolia. The hierarch also expressed gratitude to the benefactors and icon-painters through whose efforts the icon was made. He addressed special thanks to A. V. Gordeyev who was among the worshippers.

Metropolitan Anthony also congratulated Deacon Nikolay Vasin on his name day.

Moreover, the hierarch gave guidance to Deacon Makary Petukhov, who earlier served in the church of St John the Precursor, for his forthcoming mission to the Holy Land. By the decision of His Holiness Patriarch Kirill of Moscow and All Russia, he is to serve in the Russian Ecclesiastical Mission in Jerusalem.

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