Patriarch Kirill celebrates Great Vespers on the occasion of the Nativity of Christ in the Christ the Saviour Cathedral



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In the evening of 7th January 2023 on the feast of the Nativity of Our Lord and God and Saviour Jesus Christ, His Holiness the Patriarch of Moscow and All Russia Kirill celebrated Great Vespers in the Christ the Saviour Cathedral in Moscow.

Concelebrating with His Holiness were: the metropolitan of Krutitsk and Kolomna Paul, the Patriarchal vicar of the metropolitanate of Moscow; the chancellor of the Moscow Patriarchy and first auxiliary bishop of the Patriarch of Moscow and All Russia for the city of Moscow the metropolitan of Voskresensk Dionysius; the chairman of the Department for External Church Relations the metropolitan of Volokolamsk Anthony; the chairman of the Synodal Department for Monasteries and the Monastic Life the metropolitan of Kashira Theognostus; the Patriarchal exarch for Africa the metropolitan of Klin

Leonid; the director of the administrative secretariat of the Moscow Patriarchy the archbishop of Odintsovo and Krasnogorsk Thomas; the archbishop of Yegorievsk Matthew; the bishop of Vidno Tikhon; the bishop of Serpukhov Roman; bishop Jerome (Chernyshev); the chairman of the Synodal Department for Church Charity Work and Social Ministry the bishop of Vereya Panteleimon; the bishop of Zaraisk Constantine; the editor-in-chief of the publishing house of the Moscow Patriarchate the bishop of Balashikha and Orekhovo-Zuevo Nicholas; the bishop of Naro-Fominsk Paramon; the deputy chancellor of the Moscow Patriarchy the bishop of Pavlovsky Posad Siluan; the chairman of the Synodal Department for Youth the bishop of Istra Seraphim; the bishop of Sergiev Posad and Dmitrov Thomas, the deputy abbot of the Monastery of the Holy Trinity and Saint Sergius; deputy chancellor of the Moscow Patriarchy the bishop of Zelenograd Sabba; the chairman of the Synodal Department for Mission the bishop of Lukhovitsy Euphemius; the rector of the Moscow Theological Academy the bishop of Zvenigorod Cyril; the secretary of the Patriarch of Moscow and All Russia protopresbyter Vladimir Divakov; the sacristan of the Christ the Saviour Cathedral archpriest Mikhail Ryazantsev; advisor to the Patriarch of Moscow and All Russia archpriest Nikolai Balashov; deputy chairman of the Department for External Church Relations archpriest Nikolai Lischenyuk; the chairman of the Studies Committee of the Russian Orthodox Church archpriest Maxim Kozlov; deputy chairman of the DECR MP archpriest Igor Yakimchuk; secretary to His Holiness the Patriarch for the Moscow region Father Dionisy Kazantsev; the director of the legal service of the Moscow metropolitanate Father Vasily Losev; hieromonk Yermogen (Burygin), the acting chairman of the financial and economic directorate of the Moscow Patriarchate; and clergy from the both city and region of Moscow.

Also participating in the service were representatives of the Local Orthodox Churches: the metropolitan of Philippopolis Niphon, the representative of the Patriarch of Antioch and All the East; archimandrite Stephan (Dispirakis), the representative of the Patriarch of the Holy City of Jerusalem and All Palestine; archimandrite Seraphim (Shemyatovsky), the representative of the Orthodox Church of the Czech Lands and Slovakia; and archpriest Daniel Andrejuk, the representative of the Orthodox Church in America.

Praying at the service were the chairman of the Synodal Department for Church Public Relations and the Media Vladimir Legoida, the chairman of the oversight committee of the Rossia Pravoslavnaya public movement M.M. Ivanov, the father and mother superiors of monasteries, clergy and members of parish councils, staff of Synodal departments and a multitude of the faithful.

The hymns of Great Vespers were performed by the Patriarchal choir of the Christ the Saviour Cathedral under the direction of choir master I.B. Tolkachev.

The Patriarchal service was broadcast live by the TV Tsentr, Spas and Soyuz tv stations. Commentating on the service was professor of the Moscow Theological Academy A.K. Svetozarsky.

The Gospel reading was given by the Primate of the Russian Orthodox Church from an old altar Gospel book dating back to the time of the empress Elizabeth Petrovna, which is brought out from the sanctuary of the Christ the Saviour Cathedral twice a year: at Christmas and at Paschal Great Vespers.

At the end of the service on behalf of the Holy Synod of His Holiness the Patriarch was congratulated on the east of the Nativity of Christ by the metropolitan o Krutitsk and Kolomna Paul:

“Your Holiness, holy master and merciful father,

Please give your blessing to congratulate you on behalf of the episcopate, clergy and laymen and laywomen on the occasion of the great feast of the Nativity of Christ.

According to established tradition, we have all gathered in the remarkable Christ the Saviour Cathedral so that together with you, with our Primate and father, we may glorify the newborn in Bethlehem Christ the Saviour, and so that together with you we may pray and hear your edifying words which leave no person indifferent.”

Metropolitan Paul gave as a present to His Holiness an antique icon of the Nativity of Christ and a bouquet of white roses.

On behalf of the Orthodox youth of the capital His Holiness the Patriarch was congratulated by activists in the youth communities of the capital Maxim Belyaev (a volunteer in the youth department for the diocese of Moscow and altar server at the Church of Saint Nicholas in Prokrovskoye) and Sofiya Prokhorchenko (a volunteer and parishioner of the Church of the Holy Martyr Antipus at the Kolymaga Court) and presented His Holiness with a bouquet of white roses.

His Holiness Patriarch Kirill then delivered a homily to those gathered in his capacity as Primate of the Russian Orthodox Church.

Then according to tradition, the bishops, clergy and laity congratulated their ruling bishop, reports the press service of the Patriarch of Moscow and All Russia.

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