



## Meeting with representatives of Armenian Diocese of Russia and New Nakhichevan takes place at Theological Institute of Postgraduate Studies



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On December 23, a delegation of the Diocese of Russia and New Nakhichevan of the Armenian Apostolic Church visited the Ss Cyril and Methodius Theological Institute of Postgraduate Studies at the invitation of its rector, Archpriest Maxim Kozlov, chairman of the Educational Committee of the Russian Orthodox Church.

The visit was a part of a special study course “Ancient Oriental Churches” taught at the department of church practical disciplines of the Institute of Postgraduate Studies together with the Moscow

Patriarchate's Department for External Church Relations (DECR). It was a return visit; representatives of the DECR and the Theological Institute visited the Armenian church complex in Moscow on November 18, 2023.

The Armenian delegation was headed by subdeacon Vartan Pogolian, an expert in ethnic and religious relations of the Diocese of Russia and New Nakhichevan, and included David Bagdasarian, director of the Tapan Museum of Armenian Church Art; Karapet Nalbandian, coordinator of the Youth Union of the diocese; representatives of the diocesan Centers for Armenian Studies, the Religious and Educational Center, the gymnasium named after St. Krikor Naregatsi; and parishioners of the Armenian Holy Transfiguration Cathedral in Moscow.

A meeting of representatives of the Armenian Diocese of Russia and New Nakhichevan with archpriest Maxim Kozlov took place in the assembly hall of the Institute. The rector warmly welcomed the guests and told them about the past and the present of the dynamically developing higher educational institution, which is playing a key role in coordinating all research and educational activities of the Moscow Patriarchate. Also, he noted the truly fraternal relations between the Russian Orthodox Church and the Armenian Apostolic Church, which have a centuries-old history and have reached a particularly high level at present largely thanks to the role played by His Holiness Patriarch Kirill of Moscow and All Rus', DECR chairman Metropolitan Anthony of Volokolamsk, His Holiness Karekin II, Supreme Patriarch and Catholicos of All Armenians, and Archbishop Ezras Nersissian, head of the Armenian Diocese of Russia and New Nakhichevan.

Talks chaired by archpriest Maxim Kozlov focused on the implementation of a programme of cooperation between the Theological Institute and educational institutions of the Diocese of Russia and New Nakhichevan. The programme is planned to start in the early 2024 with support of the DECR and educational institutions of the Mother See of Holy Etchmiadzin. A list of concrete directions of cooperation was finalized earlier. It includes joint projects in studying liturgical traditions of the Orthodox Church and the Armenian Apostolic Church, monuments of Russian and Armenian church architecture, Russian and Armenian church history and literature, sacred music and iconography.

Representing the Russian Orthodox Church were also hegumen Antony (Kadyshev), vice-rector for youth policy and education; deacon Arseniy Grigorian, head of an Institute's department; Sergei Alferov, a DECR staff member and a senior lecturer at the department of church practical disciplines; and Andrei Gusev, head of the administration for educational programs. The Armenian side was represented by subdeacon Vartan Pogolian, David Bagdasarian and Karapet Nalbandian. At the end of the meeting, the parties exchanged Christmas gifts.

The guests had a sightseeing tour of churches and surrounding territory of the Chernigov Patriarchal

Metochion. At the Book Chamber they saw a culinary master class on preparing soaked grains eaten on Christmas Eve by tradition of Orthodox Slavic nations.

On the same day, the participants in the meeting took a guided tour of Zamoskvorechye district and visited the Martha and Mary Community of Mercy, where a reception was given in honor of representatives of the Armenian Diocese of Russia and New Nakhichevan on behalf of the abbess Elisaveta (Pozdnyakova).

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