



## The visit of representatives of Indian monasticism to Russia has been completed



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With the blessing of His Holiness Patriarch Kirill of Moscow and All Rus', representatives of the female monasticism of the Malankara Orthodox Syrian Church - the nuns of the Virgin Mary-Bethlehem Nunnery in Ernakulam, India, Abbess Dina and Nun Sheba - from November 2023 to January 2024 lived in the Vvedensky Tolga Convent of the Yaroslavl Metropolis to study the monastic experience of the Russian Orthodox Church and use in the future in Indian monasteries. The project is being implemented within the framework of the Working Group on the Development of Bilateral Relations between the Russian Orthodox Church and the Malankara Church of India.

The Indian nuns were warmly welcomed by the Abbess of the Vvedensky Tolga Nunnery, Abbess Varvara (Tretiak). During their stay in the Russian monastery, they attended daily Divine services,

performed various monastic obediences, and socialised with the sisters of the monastery, thus coming into contact with the living tradition of Russian monasticism. With the blessing of Metropolitan Vadim of Yaroslavl and Rostov, trips to the churches and monasteries of Yaroslavl, Rybinsk, Rostov the Great and Pereslavl-Zalessky were organised for the guests from India.

At the end of their stay in Russia, the guests made a pilgrimage to the Holy Trinity Lavra of St. Sergius and visited churches and monasteries in Moscow, accompanied by Hierodeacon Peter (Akhmatkhanov) of the Department for External Church Relations.

Given the special involvement of women's monastic communities in India in social ministry, the representatives of the Malankara Church visited St. Demetrius College, where they met with its leadership and learnt about the activities of the sisters of mercy. The guests also visited the Marfo-Mariinsky Convent, where they were received by its superior, Abbess Elisaveta (Pozdnyakova), who spoke about the various areas of social ministry being implemented by the monastery.

The Indian nuns gave an interview to the Spas TV channel, where they shared their impressions of living in a Russian convent.

At the end of the visit on the Feast of the Epiphany, the guests visited the Zachatievsky Stavropegial Nunnery, where they were received by the Deputy Chairman of the Synodal Department for Monasteries and Monasticism, Abbess Iuliana (Caleda).

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