



For the First Time in the Holy Land, a Solemn Service was Held on the Anniversary of the Signing of the Act of Canonical Communion



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On May 17, on the anniversary of the signing of the Act of Canonical Communion between the Moscow Patriarchate and the Russian Orthodox Church Outside Russia (ROCOR), a joint solemn service was held for the first time in the Trinity Cathedral of Jerusalem. Numerous representatives of the Russian Ecclesiastical Mission in Jerusalem of the Moscow Patriarchate and the Russian Ecclesiastical Mission of ROCOR participated in the service.

The service was led by Archimandrite Vasian (Zmeev), head of the Russian Ecclesiastical Mission of the Moscow Patriarchate. He was joined by Archimandrite Roman (Krassovsky), head of the Russian Ecclesiastical Mission of ROCOR, Igumen Nikon (Golovko), deputy head of the REM MP, and clergy from the monasteries and metochions of both Missions.

Among those praying at the service were A.D. Viktorov, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Russian Federation to Israel; F.V. Georgi, First Secretary of the Russian Embassy in Israel; N.Y. Fedorova, Head of Protocol Service of the Russian Embassy in Israel; Abbesses of Russian

monasteries in Jerusalem: Abbess Catherine (Chernysheva) of Gorny Convent with sisters, Abbess Barbara (Novikova) of the Ascension Convent on the Mount of Olives with sisters, Abbess Elizabeth (Schmelz) of the Gethsemane Convent of St. Mary Magdalene Equal-to-the-Apostles with sisters; Sister Maria (Wall), Director of the Bethany School for Girls of ROCOR; and parishioners of the Russian churches in the Holy Land.

During the fervent supplication litany, a prayer for Holy Russia and a thanksgiving prayer for the restoration of unity within the Local Russian Orthodox Church were read.

During the commemoration litany, prayers were offered for the repose of the ever-memorable Patriarch Alexii II, Metropolitan Laurus, and all those who labored for the reunification of the Russian Orthodox Church.

During the Great Entrance and the Eucharistic Canon, the names of His Beatitude Patriarch Theophilos III of the Holy City of Jerusalem and All Palestine, His Holiness Patriarch Kirill of Moscow and All Rus', and the First Hierarch of ROCOR, His Eminence Metropolitan Nicholas of Eastern America and New York, were commemorated.

After the dismissal of the Divine Liturgy, a thanksgiving moleben was served.

Following that, Archimandrite Vasian (Zmeev) and Archimandrite Roman (Krassovsky) addressed the guests of the celebration from the ambo of the Trinity Cathedral with words of greeting.

Ambassador A.D. Viktorov then addressed those gathered, saying in particular:

"I am grateful for the opportunity to speak at today's event dedicated to a significant date — the anniversary of the Act of Canonical Communion between the Russian Orthodox Church and the Russian Orthodox Church Outside Russia. This document marked an important stage in healing the trauma inflicted on our homeland over a century ago by the bloody Civil War.

The restoration of unity between the Russian Orthodox Church and ROCOR in 2007 was not just a reconciliation of believers but an unprecedented example of overcoming what seemed to be a deeply rooted schism. In this context, the 'Agreed Principles of Interaction' reached in 2022 in the Holy Land between the Russian Ecclesiastical Mission in Jerusalem of the Moscow Patriarchate and the Russian Ecclesiastical Mission in Jerusalem of ROCOR became a historical milestone.

Unfortunately, Christian communities in the Holy Land face difficulties and manifestations of intolerance. There have been attacks on Russian metochions. In this context, the Russian Embassy in Israel is conducting multifaceted work with Israeli authorities to ensure the inviolability of religious sites. I am convinced that our joint efforts will contribute to finding constructive solutions to the most pressing issues.

We are ready to further enhance our multifaceted partnership with both Missions in the interest of implementing Russia's unwavering course to preserve and multiply its spiritual and cultural presence in the Holy Land, protect the interests of Christians, and promote peace and stability in the Middle Eastern region.

In conclusion, I would like once again to sincerely congratulate everyone on today's significant date. Christ is Risen!"

As reported on the REM website, a meal was then offered to the numerous guests of the celebration

through the efforts of the sisters of the Russian Ecclesiastical Mission in Jerusalem.

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