



## Hierarchs of Russian Church take part in celebrations marking Krsna Slava of Serbian capital



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Metropolitan Nicholas of Eastern America and New York, First Hierarchy of the Russian Orthodox Church Outside of Russia, and the following members of the ROCOR Synod of Bishops: Metropolitan Mark of Berlin and Germany, Archbishop Gabriel of Montreal and Canada, Archbishop Peter of Chicago and Mid-America, Bishop Irenei of London and Western Europe and Bishop Job of Stuttgart, took part in the traditional festivities marking the Krsna Slava of Belgrade, which is celebrated on the Feast of the Holy Ascension. The delegation also included Archpriest Serafim Gan, Chancellor of the Synod of Bishops and Secretary to the First Hierarchy of the Russian Orthodox Church Outside of Russia; Archpriest Luka Novakovic and Archpriest Ljubo Milosevic, clerics of the Eastern American Diocese; Archpriest Gregory Joyce, Secretary of the Diocese of Mid-America; and Reader George Konev, ROCOR's website **reports**.

The delegation brought to Serbia the Kursk-Root “Sign” Icon of the Mother of God – the main shrine of the Russian Orthodox community abroad.

On 11<sup>th</sup> June 2024, upon his arrival in Serbia, Metropolitan Nicholas of Eastern America and New York visited the Church of St Sava in Belgrade and venerated its shrines. There he also met and talked briefly with **Metropolitan Ioann of Belgorod and Stary Oskol**.

Later the same day, the ROCOR delegation visited the Cathedral of Archangel Michael and the Museum of the History of the Serbian Orthodox Church. After that, they went to the Kalemegdan Fortress and in Ruzica attended a reception given by His Holiness Patriarch Porfirije of Serbia.

On 12<sup>th</sup> June, the Apodosis of the Feast of Holy Pascha, Metropolitan Nicholas of Eastern America and New York **officiated at the Divine Liturgy** in the Holy Trinity Church – Metochion of the Russian Orthodox Church. Among his concelebrants were Metropolitan Mark of Berlin and Germany; Bishop Ilarion of Novo Brdo, Vicar of His Holiness Patriarch Porfirije, abbot of the Visoki Dečani Monastery; Archpriest Vitaly Tarasyev, rector of the Metochion Church, representative of the Patriarch of Moscow and All Rus’ to the Serbian Patriarch; and clergymen of the two Churches. Praying and taking Holy Communion in the chancel were Archbishop Gabriel of Montreal and Canada and Bishop Job of Stuttgart.

Those who attended the divine service had an opportunity to venerate the Kursk-Root Icon of the Mother of God.

After the Liturgy, Archpriest Vitaly Tarasyev greeted the First Hierarch of the Russian Church Abroad. As he noted in his speech, among those who had once prayed in the Holy Trinity Church were Metropolitan Nicholas’s predecessors - Metropolitan Anthony (Khrapovitsky) and Metropolitan Anastasy (Gribanovsky). Father Vitaly presented to His Eminence a “Dečani” Icon of the Mother of God. Metropolitan Nicholas addressed the worshippers with an archpastoral homily. He also presented Archpriest Vitaly Tarasyev with a copy of the Kursk-Root Icon of the Most Holy Theotokos in an embroidered riza which had once adorned the miracle-working icon.

On that day later, the ROCOR delegation visited the New Cemetery in Belgrade, where Metropolitan Nicholas celebrated a memorial litiya in the crypt of Metropolitan Anthony (Khrapovitsky) and Archimandrite Feodosy (Melnik).

In the evening, the delegation members prayed with an assembly of archpastors and clergymen of the Serbian Orthodox Church led by His Holiness Patriarch Porfirije. The evening service was celebrated at

the Holy Ascension Church in Belgrade. Brought there were the Kursk-Root Icon of the Heavenly Queen and the relics of St Justin (Popović) of Čelije.

On 13<sup>th</sup> June, the Feast of the Holy Ascension, His Holiness Patriarch Porfirije of Serbia officiated at the Divine Liturgy in the Church of the Holy Ascension in Belgrade, website of the Serbian Orthodox Church **reports**. Concelebrating with him were Metropolitan Nicholas of Eastern America and New York, Metropolitan Mark of Berlin and Germany, Archbishop Gabriel of Montreal and Canada, Bishop Irenei of London and Western Europe, Bishop Siluan of Australia and New Zealand, Bishop Isihije of Valjevo, Bishop Job of Stuttgart, and Bishop Dositej of Lipljan. Great many people gathered for joint prayer on that day.

After the Liturgy, Patriarch Porfirije delivered a homily, in which he spoke of the life of the Venerable Justin of Čelije and the Kursk-Root Icon of the Mother of God.

Later that day, **a procession of the cross** that gathered together tens of thousands of people took place in Belgrade, marking its Krsna Slava. Taking part in the procession was His Holiness Patriarch Porfirije along with hierarchs and clerics of the Russian and the Serbian Orthodox Churches, including Metropolitan Nicholas of Eastern America and New York, other members of the ROCOR delegation and Metropolitan Ioann of Belgorod and Sary Oskol. Joining the procession were also Mr Miloš Vučević, Prime Minister of the Republic of Serbia, members of the Government and other statesmen. The procession of the cross ended at the Church of St Sava.

On 14<sup>th</sup> June, the Primate of the Serbian Orthodox Church **visited** the city of Sremski Karlovci, where he was met by Bishop Vasilije of Srem and local clergy.

Among those who arrived in Sremski Karlovci on the same day were the ROCOR delegation led by Metropolitan Nicholas of Eastern America and New York, Metropolitan Ioann of Belgorod and Sary Oskol and a number of hierarchs and clerics of the Serbian Church.

The ROCOR delegation brought to Sremski Karlovci the miracle-working Kursk-Root Icon of the Mother of God. On 15<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> June 2024, the faithful will be able to venerate the shrine in St Nicholas Cathedral.