



## Archbishop Daniel of Chicago and the Midwest visits Tatarstan Metropolia



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On 6<sup>th</sup> July 2024, Archbishop Daniel of Chicago and the Midwest of the Orthodox Church in America (OCA), who is visiting the Russian Orthodox Church with the blessing of His Holiness Patriarch Kirill of Moscow and All Rus', arrived in Kazan.

Archbishop Daniel is accompanied on his trip by Archpriest Daniel Andrejuk, representative of the Orthodox Church in America to the Patriarch of Moscow and All Rus', and the clergy of the Diocese of the Midwest.

At the Kazan airport, His Eminence was met by Metropolitan Kirill of Kazan and Tatarstan, website of the Tatarstan Metropolia **reports**. The two archpastors visited the Kazan Kremlin, prayed together in its

Holy Annunciation Cathedral, visited a cell of St. Gurias, first Archbishop of Kazan, and the lower Church of St. Gurias and All the Saints. Priest Viktor Belskykh, sacristan of the Holy Annunciation Cathedral, told the guest about the history of the oldest church in Kazan.

In the Kul Sharif Mosque, which Archbishop Daniel visited next, he was greeted by the First Deputy Mufti of the Republic of Tatarstan, Ilfar hazrat Khasanov.

The American hierarch also visited the Kazan Diocesan Administration. Metropolitan Kirill told him about the history of Orthodoxy in the Kazan land, its saints and shrines, and noted that restoration works in old monasteries and churches in Tatarstan are being carried out with support from the local authorities. As the head of the Tatarstan Metropolia pointed out, centuries-old peace and accord among people of different nationalities and faiths are treasured in the region.

In the evening of 6<sup>th</sup> July, the eve of 2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday after Pentecost and commemoration day of All the Saints Who Shone Forth in the Russian Land, the two hierarchs **celebrated the All-Night Vigil** in the Kazan Cathedral of the Monastery of the Kazan Icon of the Mother of God.

After the Gospel reading, Metropolitan Kirill greeted Archbishop Daniel, saying in particular, “It is a great pleasure and spiritual joy to see His Eminence Daniel, Archbishop of Chicago and the Midwest, among the pilgrims visiting our city and our monastery. The group of pilgrims representing the Autocephalous Orthodox Church in America is on its way to the town of Tikhvin for the feast day of the Tikhvin Icon of the Mother of God. This year marks 20 years since that icon was returned to our country. And the Kazan Icon that we venerate in our cathedral was also returned to Russia twenty years ago to mark the millennium of Kazan in 2004. Today this icon is the major shrine for our Kazan land, and many people flock here to venerate it.”

Archbishop Daniel expressed his genuine joy at the opportunity to pray together with Metropolitan Kirill in the cathedral dedicated to the Most Holy Theotokos and to be in Russia on the commemoration day of All Russian Saints. Nowadays, Orthodox Christians in North America also have a feast day when they commemorate all the saints who shone forth in the American land, Archbishop Daniel said and noted that American Orthodox Christians, just like people in Russia, strive to be part of the saints’ holiness and live within it. As His Eminence also said, Orthodox Christians in America and Russia have one faith and similar church life; they have much in common; and the history of the Orthodox Church in America is closely linked with the history of the Russian Orthodoxy. The OCA hierarch mentioned the saints glorified in the American and the Russian Churches, such as Herman of Alaska, the Holy Patriarch Tikhon, and Hieromartyr John Kochurov.

On 7<sup>th</sup> July, Metropolitan Kirill of Kazan and Tatarstan and Archbishop Daniel of Chicago and the

Midwest **celebrated the Divine Liturgy** in the Holy Dormition Cathedral of the Holy Dormition Monastery in Sviyazhsk.

Concelebrating with the archpastors were Archpriest Daniel Andrejuk, representative of the Orthodox Church in America to the Patriarch of Moscow and All Rus'; Hieromonk Kirill (Korytko), secretary of the Tatarstan Metropolia; Hegumen Pimen (Iventyev), dean of the Kazan Diocese monasteries; Hegumen Gavriil (Rozhnov), abbot of the Raifa Monastery of the Mother of God; Hegumen Simeon (Kulagin), abbot of the Holy Dormition Monastery in Sviyazhsk; Hieromonk Amvrosy (Gornovsky), acting abbot of the Holy Ascension and St. Macarius Monastery; Archpriest Sergy Khokhlov of St. Alexander Nevsky Church in Kazan; Hieromonk Philipp (Kiselev), dean of the Layishevo Church District of the Kazan Diocese; Priest Viktor Belskykh, sacristan of the Holy Annunciation Cathedral of the Kazan Kremlin; as well as the clergy of the Diocese of the Midwest of the Orthodox Church in America and ordained brethren of the Sviyazhsk Monastery.

At the end of the divine service, prayers of praise were offered to St. John the Baptist, whose nativity the Church commemorated that day, and to all the saints who shone forth in the Russian land.

The head of the Tatarstan Metropolia delivered a homily, in which he addressed Archbishop Daniel, saying in particular, "Dear Vladyka, we are happy to have you here and hope that this brief visit to our land will bring you spiritual joy in your journey. Celebrating the Divine Liturgy here today and partaking of the Holy Mysteries of Christ, we find comfort in the love and mercy of God. We wish you good health, strength in body and spirit, and help from God in your service for the good of the Holy Orthodoxy on the faraway American continent. The American land is sanctified by the labours of the saints pleasing unto God, who are lovingly revered in Russia as well. Among them is St. Tikhon the Patriarch of Moscow and All Russia – a model of Christian life, a bearer of the Russian culture and the Russian spirit."

Archbishop Daniel conveyed to all those present blessings from His Beatitude Metropolitan Tikhon of All America and Canada.

In his speech, he noted that the Russian Church is the Mother Church and the Sister Church for the Orthodox Church in America, and added that shared prayer serves as a sign of their unity – the unity which is manifested whenever Orthodox Christians celebrate together the Divine Liturgy and partake of One Chalice. He emphasised that their unity is revealed not only at the rare moments of meetings, but every time the Divine Liturgy is celebrated in any church, in any monastery. No matter where they are, Orthodox Christians form one Body of Christ, His Eminence said and added in conclusion that despite all the present-day challenges and divisions taking place in the world, the faithful of the Russian Orthodox Church and the Orthodox Church in America preserve their unity in Christ.

That same day later, the OCA hierarch visited the Convent of St. John the Baptist in Sviyazhsk.

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