



## **Saint Petersburg Theological Academy hosts conference on the occasion of the 95th anniversary of metropolitan Nikodim (Rotov) entitled ‘The Person of Metropolitan Nikodim in the History of the Church’.**



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On 15<sup>th</sup> October on the 95<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the birth of ever-memorable metropolitan Nikodim (Rotov) an international scholarly conference on his life and ministry opened in the Saint Petersburg Theological Academy. The conference was entitled ‘The Person of Metropolitan Nikodim in the History of the Church’.

A plenary session took place on the first day of the conference. It was opened by the president of the Russian Academy for Education O. Yu. Vasilieva, reports the press service of the SPTA.

Words of greetings were then addressed to the conference participants.

Greetings from the chairman of the Department for External Church Relations of the Moscow Patriarchate the metropolitan of Volokolamsk Anthony were read out by the secretary of the DECR for affairs of the distant abroad archpriest Sergei Zvonaryov. In his greetings metropolitan Anthony reminded those present that metropolitan Nikodim (Rotov) became the head of the DECR, the oldest synodal institution, in 1960 when Russian church diplomacy was confronted by greater and more responsible challenges: "The ever-memorable metropolitan widened significantly the church's international contacts, and her voice resounded ever more strongly and with greater authority at various Christian forums. Metropolitan Nikodim looked boldly into the future and actively created this future. Over the course of twelve years when he was head of the DECR he raised a new generation of educated bishops with experience in the sphere of international communications and with experience of serving abroad." Noting that the life of metropolitan Nikodim, which was an integral part of the main events in the life of the church in the 1960s and 1970s, was eventful and brought forth many fruits, he highlighted the fact that the strategy of building up the church that the metropolitan set forth proved its worth many decades later in new historical circumstances. Metropolitan Anthony assured listeners that "by taking on board the experience of metropolitan Nikodim's ministry this helps us to draw useful lessons for contemporary church ministry, for seeking out answers to the challenges of the external world."

Those present also heard greetings from the chairman of the study committee of the Russian Orthodox Church, the rector of the Saints Cyril and Methodius Postgraduate Institute archpriest Maxim Kozlov and the corresponding member of the Russian Academy of Sciences and chairman of the scientific council of the Russian Academy of Sciences the Role of Religion in History by L. A. Belyaev.

There were then speeches by authors who acquainted their listeners with the key peculiarities of the life and ministry of metropolitan Nikodim and they gave an evaluation to his work in various posts of the Russian Orthodox Church.

Giving presentations were: academician of the Russian Academy for Education, doctor of historical sciences, emeritus member of the Russian Federation O. Yu. Vasilieva on the topic of metropolitan Nikodim (Rotov) in the history of the Russian Orthodox Church and its external political aspects; emeritus teacher of arts of the Russian Federation, deputy rector for culture and dean of the faculty of church arts of the Saint Petersburg Theological Academy Ye. M. Gundyayev on the topic of metropolitan Nikodim (Rotov) at the Leningrad Theological Academy; doctor of historical sciences, leading scientific consultant and main archivist of the Central State Archive of Saint Petersburg, professor of chair of church history at the SPTA M. V. Shkarovsky on the topic of the work of metropolitan Nikodim (Rotov) in administering the diocese of Leningrad from 1963 to 1978; candidate of theology, secretary of the Department for External Relations of the Moscow Patriarchate for affairs of the distant abroad archpriest

Sergei Zvonaryov on the topic of the chairman of the Department for External Church Relations metropolitan Nikodim Rotov and his talents as a diplomat; doctor of theology, deputy rector for studies at the Saints Cyril and Methodius Postgraduate Institute Ye. A. Pilipenko on the topic of metropolitan Nikodim (Rotov) and western theological thought of that time and its intellectual context; and candidate of historical sciences, candidate of theology (Moscow State Linguistics University) Father Dimitry Safonov on the topic of metropolitan Pimen and metropolitan Nikodim as two candidates for the Patriarchal Throne.

After the plenary session the conference participants visited the church-archeological museum of the Academy where they became acquainted with the renewed sections on the permanent exhibition of the memorial hall of metropolitan Nikodim (Rotov) and an exhibition dedicated to the memory of the new martyrs and confessors of the church of Russia.

The conference concludes on 17<sup>th</sup> October.

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