



THE RUSSIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH
Department for External Church Relations

A conference dedicated to the 95th birth anniversary of Metropolitan Nikodim (Rotov) is held in Moscow



**Встреча «Вся моя сознательная жизнь
принадлежит Церкви»
К 95-летию со дня рождения митрополита Никодима (Ротова)**



**22 октября 2024 г., 16:00
Центр межрелигиозного диалога
Библиотеки иностранной литературы**



БИБЛИОТЕКА
ИНОСТРАННОЙ ЛИТЕРАТУРЫ

DECR Communications Service, 24.10.2024.

On October 22, a meeting entitled “My Entire Conscious Life Belongs to the Church” was held at the Center for Interreligious Dialogue of the Rudomino Library of Foreign Literature, Moscow, marking the 95th birth anniversary of Metropolitan Nikodim (Rotov), a foremost hierarch of the Russian Orthodox Church of the 20th century. Metropolitan Nikodim (1929-1978) played a vital role in protecting the Church from repressions of the Soviet atheistic state, as well as in the developing and strengthening of theological education, having raised a generation of bishops and priests.

Metropolitan Nikodim made a name for himself as a shrewd diplomat who took the Russian Orthodox Church to a new level of relations with the most part of Christian Churches in the world. Over the years, he held the positions of the head of the Russian Ecclesiastical Mission in Jerusalem, chairman of the Moscow Patriarchate’s Department for External Church Relations, head of the Publishing Department of the Moscow Patriarchate, chairman of the Holy Synod Commission on Christian Unity, and Patriarchal Exarch of Western Europe.

Among those attending the meeting were Metropolitan Ionafan of Tulchin and Bratslav; Mr. Alexey V. Yudin, PhD in history, advisor to the Director General of the Library of Foreign Literature; Ms Giovanna Parravicini, director of 'Pokrovskie Vorota' Cultural Center; Ms Ritta B. Butova, PhD in history, senior researcher and academic secretary of the Center for the History of Religion and Church, Institute of Russian History of the Russian Academy of Sciences; hieromonk Melkhisedek (Skripkin) of the Monastery of St. John the Theologian, the Diocese of Ryazan; Ms Natalia N. Zazulina, historian, author and publicist; Mr. Artem P. Banshchikov, coordinator of 'Nasledie' Cultural and Historical Center; and Mr. Vasily A. Yurin, honorary local historian of Ryazhsk district, Ryazan region.

Miguel Palacio, ThD, Deputy Director General of the Library of Foreign Literature for Interregional and International Cooperation, member of the board of the Russian Library Association, served as moderator. He read out the greeting to the participants from Metropolitan Anthony of Volokolamsk, chairman of the Moscow Patriarchate's Department for External Church Relations (DECR).

"The name of Metropolitan Nikodim is associated with a brilliant page in the DECR history," Metropolitan Anthony wrote in his greeting. "The ever-memorable hierarch was an ardent supporter of interchurch ties, promoted the extension of academic relations, and provided conditions for educating young people from the Local Orthodox Churches in theological schools of the Russian Church. He lended every kind of assistance to the development of theological contacts and used to lead delegations of church scholars at bilateral discussions. He was keen about the idea of finding ways to Christian unity based on the heritage of the undivided Church. His intense international activity was aimed at overcoming isolation of the Russian Orthodox Church in the Soviet state. He succeeded in saving many churches, monasteries and theological educational institutions from closure by using external relations of the Moscow Patriarchate. Metropolitan Nikodim cared about the future of our Church, managed to surmount obstacles put by the authorities for enrolling the most capable young people in the Leningrad Theological Academy and taught them there to celebrate divine services and deliver sermons. Also, he brought some of them on international activity.

In their addresses, the speakers touched on the details of Metropolitan Nikodim's biography and ministry, as well as many aspects of his diplomatic and theological activities. For instance, Mr. Banshchikov told the audience about virtuoso diplomatic efforts deployed by the hierarch for defending the Leningrad Theological Academy in 1963-1964 through which this theological school rapidly developed and became famous abroad.

Metropolitan Ionafan, who was consecrated as a bishop by Metropolitan Nikodim, shared his memories of the hierarch, in particular of his style of celebrating divine services easily understood by the faithful. Metropolitan Nikodim's motto was 'to gather the scattered,' the words from the Bible repeated by St.

Basil the Great, Metropolitan Ionafan emphasized. Also, he recalled that Metropolitan Nikodim celebrated Divine Liturgy every day.

"The ever-memorable hierarch was a great lover of painting. There were old icons in his small home church in Serebryany Bor house which he venerated with reverence. He always talked with seminary and academy students about rich traditions of Holy Orthodoxy and had the greatest faith in the words of the Savior about future unity of the Church that is bound to come as it has been prophesized by the Lord. Metropolitan Nikodim believed that the striving for the unity of the Churches should be a priority dogmatically consistent with the tradition of the undivided Church of the first centuries of Christianity," Metropolitan Ionafan said.

At the end of the meeting, its participants expressed hope that conferences dedicated to the church hierarch of famous memory can take place in future.

Source: <https://mospat.ru/en/news/92393/>