



## **DECR chairman takes part in church celebrations in India**



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On November 1<sup>st</sup>, during his **visit to India**, Metropolitan Anthony of Volokolamsk, chairman of the Moscow Patriarchate's Department for External Church Relations, met with the Primate of the Malankara Orthodox Syrian Church, His Holiness Catholicos Baselios Marthoma Mathews III. Discussed at the meeting, which took place in Parumala, State of Kerala, was a wide range of issues pertaining to inter-church relationships.

Later that day, Metropolitan Anthony took part in a special ceremony that marked the commemoration day of Saint Gregorios of Parumala venerated by Indian Christians. The celebrations brought together thousands of pilgrims from different Indian cities and other countries. The Primate of the Malankara Church of India delivered a welcoming address, in which he noted, in particular, a high level of

cooperation with the Russian Orthodox Church. His Holiness Catholicos Baselios Marthoma Mathews III mentioned that earlier that day he had had a **phone conversation** with His Holiness Patriarch Kirill of Moscow and All Rus', and pointed out the importance of the Primate of the Russian Church for the entire Christendom. Metropolitan Anthony of Volokolamsk greeted His Holiness Baselios Mathoma Mathews III and all those assembled for the celebrations on behalf of His Holiness Patriarch Kirill of Moscow and All Rus'. In his speech, His Eminence dwelt, among other things, on a significant role of saints as models for Christians seeking spiritual perfection. The DECR chairman presented a gift to the Primate of the Malankara Church – an icon of Saint Sergius of Radonezh.

Among those who also delivered speeches at the ceremony were Metropolitan Yuhanon Mar Chrisostomos of Niranam, Secretary of the Holy Synod of the Malankara Church, and Archbishop Thomas Tharayil of Changanassery of the Syro-Malabar Church.

Presented during the celebrations was a book, published by the Malankara Church, about Archimandrite Andronik (Elpidinsky), a Russian missionary of the 20<sup>th</sup> century who carried out his service in India, as well as an English translation of a book by Father Andronik, entitled Eighteen Years in India.

After the ceremony, a solemn procession went to the Church of Ss. Peter and Paul. Buried there is St. Gregorios of Parumala. At the church, the celebrations in honour of the saint continued.

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