



## **Metropolitan Anthony of Volokolamsk conducted a Thanksgiving moleben in the Patriarchal Alexander Nevsky Cathedral in Sofia**



**DECR Communication service, 23.11.2024.**

On November 22, the Chairman of the Department for External Church Relations of the Moscow Patriarchate, Metropolitan Anthony of Volokolamsk, who is visiting Bulgaria with the blessing of His Holiness Patriarch Kirill of Moscow and All Rus' to mark the centenary of the consecration of the Patriarchal Alexander Nevsky Cathedral in Sofia, visited this main church of the Bulgarian Orthodox Church.

At the entrance to the cathedral, Metropolitan Anthony and his accompanying delegation were welcomed by the Rector, Bishop Gerasim of Melnik. After venerating the holy relics housed in the

cathedral, Metropolitan Anthony and Bishop Gerasim conducted a solemn thanksgiving service in honor of the centennial anniversary of the cathedral's consecration. The hierarchs were joined in service by Patriarchal Advisor Archpriest Nikolai Balashov, Deputy Chairman of the DECR Archpriest Igor Yakimchuk, and the Rector of the Metochion of the Russian Orthodox Church in Sofia, Archpriest Vladimir Tyshchuk.

At the conclusion of the service, Bishop Gerasim of Melnik addressed the delegation of the Russian Orthodox Church with words of greeting. He expressed joy over the shared prayerful communion that took place in the historic Alexander Nevsky Cathedral, which was built jointly by Russians and Bulgarians and stands as a testament to the Christian love that has united the two brotherly peoples since ancient times.

Metropolitan Anthony then gave a response, emphasizing that the Sofia cathedral dedicated to St. Alexander Nevsky is not only a house of prayer but also a monument to the Russian soldiers who gave their lives for the freedom of the Bulgarian people, thereby fulfilling the Gospel commandment: "Greater love has no one than this, than to lay down one's life for his friends" (John 15:13). The hierarch noted that the unity of the two nations is founded on the holy Orthodox faith and their shared history, and no evil forces can shake this unity.

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Source: <https://mospat.ru/en/news/92537/>