



## **DECR Chairman begins working visit to Bahrain**



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On December 9<sup>th</sup>, with the blessing of His Holiness Patriarch Kirill of Moscow and All Rus', Metropolitan Anthony of Volokolamsk, chairman of the Department for External Church Relations of the Moscow Patriarchate, arrived in the Kingdom of Bahrain. His Eminence is accompanied on his working visit by Archimandrite Alexander (Zarkeshev), rector of the Church of the Holy Apostle Philip in Sharjah, the United Arab Emirates, and Priest Nikolai Vasin, secretary to the DECR chairman.

Meeting the delegation at the Bahrain International Airport was H.E. Mr Alexei Skosyrev, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Russian Federation to the Kingdom of Bahrain.

That same day, Metropolitan Anthony met with Dr. Shaikh Abdullah bin Ahmed Al Khalifa, Minister of Transportation and Telecommunications of Bahrain and Chairman of the Board of Trustees of the King Hamad Global Centre for Peaceful Coexistence.

In the course of the lengthy meeting, the DECR chairman told Shaikh Al Khalifa about the current state of interfaith relations in Russia and activities of the Department for External Church Relations in promoting the Orthodoxy-Islam dialogue.

Having warmly greeted the high guest, the Minister emphasized the importance for representatives of traditional religions to deepen their knowledge about each other and to develop religious education in this context.

The participants in the meeting were unanimous in the view that Christianity and Islam have similar notions of traditional moral and family values.

Metropolitan Anthony thanked Shaikh Al Khalifa for the good attitude and goodwill the Russian Orthodox community in Bahrain enjoys. At the conclusion of the meeting, the DECR chairman and the Minister exchanged memorable gifts.

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