



## Metropolitan Anthony meets with the King of Bahrain



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On December 10<sup>th</sup>, at Al Safriah Palace in Manama, capital of Bahrain, Metropolitan Anthony of Volokolamsk, chairman of the Department for External Church Relations of the Moscow Patriarchate, was received by the country's reigning monarch – His Majesty King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa.

Taking part in the meeting were also Mr Alexei Skosyrev, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Russian Federation to the Kingdom of Bahrain; 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.

The archpastor conveyed to the King of Bahrain heartfelt greetings and warm wishes from His Holiness Patriarch Kirill of Moscow and All Rus' and congratulated him on the upcoming Bahrain National Day and the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of His Majesty's accession to the royal throne.

King Hamad warmly greeted Metropolitan Anthony and asked him to convey his regards and gratitude to His Holiness Patriarch Kirill. The visit of the Russian Orthodox Church's delegation to Bahrain was warmly welcomed by His Majesty.

The DECR chairman shared with the monarch his impressions of **the meetings** he **had already had** during his **visit** and his appreciation of the level of interfaith relations and civil concord in Bahrain.

The hierarch also highlighted various aspects of external activities of the Russian Orthodox Church and its relationships with other religions within Russia and at the international level.

The participants in the meeting agreed that Orthodoxy and Islam have in many ways common approach to traditional morality issues and pointed out that nowadays, when spiritual foundations within certain Christian denominations are eroding, cooperation between Orthodox Christians and Muslims in upholding moral and family traditions is of particular importance.

Raised during the meeting was also a topic of religious freedom and the related situation in the world. Metropolitan Anthony told the monarch about the plight of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church suffering from persecutions.

The DECR chairman expressed special gratitude to King Hamad for taking care of the Russian Orthodox faithful residing in Bahrain.

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