A Lecture on "The Feast of the Nativity of Christ in the Coptic Church" Held at the St. Petersburg Theological Academy



DECR Communication Service, 14.12.2024.

On December 12, the Student Liturgical Society of the St. Petersburg Theological Academy held a lecture titled “The Feast of the Nativity of Christ in the Coptic Church.” The speaker was Priest Basil Samir of the Coptic Church. Representatives of the Orthodox St. Tikhon’s University for the Humanities, as well as the Tambov and Orenburg Theological Seminaries, participated remotely, according to the Press Service of the St. Petersburg Theological Academy.

Before the lecture, the Academy’s Vice-Rector for Academic Affairs, Archpriest Vladimir Khulap, welcomed Father Basil and the audience, noting that this meeting continues the collaboration between theological educational institutions of the Russian Orthodox Church and the Coptic Church. Earlier, from

September 9 to 19, representatives of the Coptic Theological Seminary in Cairo and the Seminary of the El-Muharraq Monastery of the Mother of God in the Assiut Province visited the St. Petersburg Theological Academy with the blessing of His Holiness Patriarch Kirill of Moscow and All Rus'.

Father Basil began his presentation by explaining: “Currently, the Coptic Orthodox Church celebrates the glorious Nativity of Christ on the 29th day of the month of Kiahk in the Coptic calendar, which corresponds to January 7 in the Gregorian calendar. This blessed feast is preceded by a 43-day fast. During Kiahk, Copts offer daily special praises and prayers to God. Of course, this feast, as well as the fasts and liturgical prayers that precede it, has gone through many stages of development before becoming what it is today.”

During the lecture, Father Basil elaborated on the Nativity Fast, the month of daily praises, and the celebration of the Nativity of Christ itself, including its liturgical form.

“The Coptic Church usually uses the Liturgy of St. Gregory the Theologian on the eve of the feast (this day is called ‘Paramon’—preparation) because it contains references to God’s divine plan and speaks of the redemptive sacrifice of the Son through His incarnation, crucifixion, and resurrection.”

The speaker also highlighted several liturgical texts of particular significance in the Coptic Church’s Nativity celebrations.

At the end of the lecture, Father Basil answered students’ questions about the liturgical language, the Feast of the Wedding at Cana, and the liturgical features of Christmas Eve (Paramon). Archpriest Vladimir thanked the representative of the Coptic Church for his informative presentation and expressed hope for future meetings.

Source: https://mospat.ru/en/news/92626/