Students from Coptic Church admitted to Smolensk Theological Seminary



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On February 11th, students from the Coptic Church began their studies at the Smolensk Orthodox Theological Seminary. The educational programme is being implemented with the assistance of the Department for External Church Relations of the Moscow Patriarchate.

The agreement on the subject had been achieved between His Holiness Patriarch Kirill of Moscow and All Rus' and His Holiness Coptic Patriarch Tawadros II at the suggestion of the Commission for Dialogue between the Russian Orthodox Church and the Coptic Orthodox Church.

Studying at the Smolensk Seminary are Hierodeacon Maximous Al Anba Paula from the Monastery of St. Paul of Thebes, Hierodeacon Jerome Al Anba Bishoy from the Monastery of St. Bishoy the Great, and Mr Isaac Shehata from the Minya Diocese.

The curriculum developed specifically for the Coptic students is supervised by Ms Olga Ivanina,

lecturer at the International Students Department of the Smolensk Theological Seminary. Mr Sergei Alferov, DECR staff member and senior lecturer at the Department of Applied Church Disciplines of Ss. Cyril and Methodius Theological Institute of Postgraduate Studies, acts as the project consultant.

At the first stage, the students are studying via videoconferencing. Soon, they will arrive in Smolensk to continue their education on site.

Other students from the Coptic Church are studying now or have completed their studies at the Moscow and St. Petersburg Theological Academies. Various academic projects within the framework of the Russian Church's cooperation with the Coptic Church are being carried out by Ss. Cyril and Methodius Theological Institute of Postgraduate Studies.

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