



THE RUSSIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH

Department for External Church Relations

DECR chairman congratulates Archbishop Joani of Tirana and All Albania on his election as Primate of Albanian Orthodox Church



Metropolitan Anthony of Volokolamsk, chairman of the Department for External Church Relations of the Moscow Patriarchate, sent congratulations to Archbishop Joani of Tirana and All Albania on his election as Primate of the Albanian Orthodox Church. The text of the letter is given below.

His Eminence JOANI

Archbishop-Elect of Tirana, Duress and All Albania

Your Eminence,

Please accept my heartfelt congratulations on your deserved election to the Primatial Throne of the Albanian Orthodox Church.

Giving thanks to God, I would like to note that placed on the church high candle stand is a faithful disciple and closest associate of His Beatitude Archbishop Anastasios of blessed memory, who is deeply revered in the whole Orthodox world. Together with him, you worked towards and witnessed the miraculous revival of the holy Orthodoxy in the ancient Albanian land. It is also noteworthy that after His Beatitude's demise it has fallen to your lot to continue his Primatial labours, using your experience as a confessor, theologian and archpastor *for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ* (Eph 4:12).

In the Russian Orthodox Church, you have been well remembered and loved since your visit in 2013 when you took part in the celebrations marking the 1025th anniversary of the Baptism of Rus'. Your election gives us hope that the Most Holy Albanian Church will continue to hold fast to its firm canonical stance and support the persecuted Orthodox Christians in Ukraine. We also hope that together our sister Local Churches will *keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace* (Eph 4:3). We assure you of our prayers and wholehearted support.

Dear Vladyka, I wish you almighty help from God in the demanding Primatial service ahead and the heavenly patronage of all the saints who shone forth in the Albanian land, as well as peace, health, salvation and success in every good endeavour for many years to come!

With respectful love in the Lord,

+ANTHONY
Metropolitan of Volokolamsk
Chairman
Department for External Church Relations
Moscow Patriarchate