



## **Patriarchal Exarch of Africa celebrates Liturgy in the capital of Madagascar on Sunday of the Veneration of the Cross**



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On March 23, the third Sunday of Lent, also called Sunday of the Veneration of the Cross, Metropolitan Konstantin of Zaisk, Patriarchal Exarch of Africa, celebrated the Divine Liturgy in Antananarivo, the capital of Madagascar.

Before the service, the Exarch bestowed priestly pectoral crosses upon the six new priests of the South African Diocese, who had transferred to the Russian Orthodox Church from the Patriarchate of Alexandria. One clergyman was received on this day, and another five on the previous evening.

Assisting His Eminence during the Liturgy were priest Georgy Maximov, chairman of the Missionary Department of the Patriarchal Exarchate of Africa; priests Basil Randrianaivu and Nicholas Bruno, deans of the Northern and Southern Church Districts of Madagascar, and all the priests of the South African Diocese in Madagascar.

The service was celebrated in Church Slavonic and Malagasy, the Exarchate's website reports.

Among those attending the divine service were Mr. Monja Roidefo, the former Prime Minister of Madagascar; Mr. Richard Rakotonirina, president of the 'Friends of Russia in Madagascar' Association; the locals and Russian compatriots.

Also praying during the Liturgy were nun Mary (Razanamahasua) and sisters of the monastic community.

The sermon before Holy Communion was delivered by priest Georgy Maximov.

In his archpastoral word said at the end of the service, Metropolitan Konstantin greeted the officials and new clergymen of the Exarchate. The ranking guests greeted the Exarch. All worshippers received small crosses and icons.

Later that day, the Exarch gave a press conference to media representatives.

After that, he held a general meeting of the clergy of the two Madagascar deaneries.

At the end of the meeting, Metropolitan Konstantin presented the clergy with Orthodox booklets and liturgical texts translated into French by the staff of the Patriarchal Exarchate of Africa.

Also, the Patriarchal Exarch handed over antimensios, Eucharistic sets and other liturgical utensils to the newly appointed priests.

After the meeting, Metropolitan Konstantin held individual talks with several clergymen.

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