



## **Patriarchal Exarch of Western Europe represents Russian Orthodox Church at enthronement of new Primate of Albanian Church**



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On March 29, the enthronement of the newly elected Primate of the Albanian Orthodox Church took place in Tirana, the capital of Albania. Following the voting results on March 16 of this year, the members of the Holy Synod of the Albanian Orthodox Church unanimously elected Metropolitan John of Korça as the new Primate.

The enthronement began with the solemn entrance of the newly elected Primate of the Albanian Orthodox Church into the Cathedral of the Resurrection of Christ in Tirana. Bishop Anastasios of Kruja then read the message of the Holy Synod of the Albanian Church concerning the election of the new Archbishop of Tirana and All Albania, and Metropolitan Nicholas of Apollonia and Fier presented the newly elected head of the Church with the Primate's staff.

Among those present at the enthronement were: the President of the Republic of Albania, Bajram Begaj; the Speaker of the Albanian Parliament, Elisa Spiropali; the Minister of Defense of Greece, Nikos Dendias; and the Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Russian Federation to Albania, A.A. Zaitsev.

Representatives of the Local Orthodox Churches participating in the enthronement included: Metropolitan Emmanuel of Chalcedon (Patriarchate of Constantinople); Metropolitan Seraphim of Zimbabwe and Angola (Patriarchate of Alexandria); Metropolitan Ignatius of France, Western and Central Europe (Patriarchate of Antioch); Archbishop Nektarios of Anthedon (Patriarchate of Jerusalem); Metropolitan Gerasimos of Zugdidi and Tsaishi (Georgian Orthodox Church); Metropolitan Theodosios of Raška-Prizren and Metropolitan Arsenije of Niš (both from the Serbian Orthodox Church); Metropolitan Nifon of Târgoviște (Romanian Orthodox Church); Metropolitan Seraphim of Nevrokop and Metropolitan Grigorij of Vratsa (both from the Bulgarian Orthodox Church); Bishop Christophoros of Karpasia (Orthodox Church of Cyprus); Metropolitan Justin of Nea Krini and Kalamaria, Metropolitan Athanasios of Sisanou and Siatista, Metropolitan Nektarios of Kerkyra, and Metropolitan Kallinikos of Kastoria (all from the Church of Greece); Bishop Pavel of Hajnówka (Polish Orthodox Church); Archbishop Georgiy of Michalovce and Košice (Orthodox Church of the Czech Lands and Slovakia); Metropolitan Joseph of Tetovo and Gostivar and Bishop Jakov of Štip (both from the Macedonian Orthodox Church); and Bishop Nikodim of Boston (Orthodox Church in America).

With the blessing of His Holiness Patriarch Kirill of Moscow and All Rus', the Russian Orthodox Church was represented at the enthronement in Tirana by the Patriarchal Exarch of Western Europe, Metropolitan Nestor of Korsun and Western Europe. Following the enthronement, the Patriarchal Exarch personally congratulated the new Primate of the Albanian Church and presented Archbishop John with encolpion pectoral crosses as gifts.

Metropolitan Nestor was accompanied by Hieromonk Irinei (Gribov), rector of the St. Genevieve of Paris Spiritual and Educational Center, as reported by the website of the Korsun Diocese.

Later that day, a formal luncheon was hosted in Tirana in honor of His Beatitude Archbishop John of Tirana, during which the newly elected Primate of the Albanian Orthodox Church received congratulations from representatives of the Local Orthodox Churches. Metropolitan Nestor of Korsun and Western Europe conveyed the greetings of His Holiness Patriarch Kirill of Moscow and All Rus'.

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