



## First Hierarchy of the Serbian Church visits Donskoy Monastery in Moscow



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His Holiness Patriarch Porfirije of Serbia visited the Stavropegial Donskoy Monastery in Moscow on April 23. His Holiness was accompanied by members of the delegation of the Serbian Orthodox Church who had arrived in Moscow.

Among those accompanying him were: Metropolitan Antony of Volokolamsk, Chairman of the Moscow Patriarchate's Department for External Church Relations (DECR); Archpriest Nikolay Balashov, Advisor to His Holiness the Patriarch of Moscow and All Rus'; Archpriest Igor Yakimchuk, Vice-Chairman of the DECR; Hieromonk Feofan (Lukyanov), Head of the DECR Protocol Sector; A.Yu. Khoshev, staff member of the DECR Secretariat for Inter-Orthodox Relations.

His Holiness Patriarch Porfirije was greeted by Metropolitan Theognost of Kashira, Chairman of the

Synodal Department for Monasteries and Monasticism and Abbot of the Donskoy Monastery, along with the brotherhood of the monastery.

In the monastery's Great Cathedral, the Primate of the Serbian Orthodox Church offered a prayer and venerated the relics of St. Tikhon, Patriarch of Moscow.

Metropolitan Theognost then addressed His Holiness Patriarch Porfirije:

"I am glad to welcome you here, at our holy sites—the Don Icon of the Mother of God and the relics of St. Tikhon, Patriarch of Moscow and All Russia. Patriarch Tikhon lived in a very difficult and challenging time, but he stood firm, unshaken, and we still feel the light of his life and his prayers today. We believe that through his prayers, the Lord will grant you strength to bear the heavy and arduous cross in our own troubled times. Christ is Risen!"

In his response, Patriarch Porfirije expressed joy at the opportunity to visit the Donskoy Monastery and venerate the relics of St. Tikhon.

"May God grant us patience, humility, and above all—love for the Lord and love for one another. May we live according to God's commandments, and may the Lord, through the prayers of St. Tikhon, be with us all," His Holiness said.

"May the Lord, through the prayers of St. Tikhon, ensure that the Russian and Serbian Orthodox Churches remain one Church, for this touches upon the very essence of the Church—it is the Body of Christ, and it is one. In this unity in Christ, the Russian people and the Serbian people are always one people," testified Patriarch Porfirije.

Following this, the Patriarch and his delegation visited the memorial museum of St. Tikhon at the Donskoy Monastery. Metropolitan Theognost of Kashira provided explanations to His Holiness Patriarch Porfirije during the tour of the museum.