



## Monastics of the Russian Orthodox Church arrive in Egypt



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On May 11, a delegation of monastics of the Russian Orthodox Church, headed by Metropolitan Mitrofan of Gorlovka and Slavyansk, arrived in Egypt at the invitation of His Holiness Tawadros II, Patriarch of the Coptic Church, for a pilgrimage to the holy places of the early centuries of the Christian era, including those associated with the emergence and flowering of Christian monasticism and also for acquaintance with the life in monasteries and convents of the Coptic Church at present. The pilgrimage has been blessed by of His Holiness Patriarch Kirill of Moscow and All Rus'.

The visit is taking place in the context of the ongoing dialogue between the Russian Orthodox Church and the Coptic Church and is part of the program of mutual visits of Russian and Coptic monastics implemented in recent years.

The delegation includes Metropolitan Leonty of Voronezh and Liski; Bishop Dionisy of Rossosh and Ostrogzhsk; hieromonk Stefan (Igumnov), DECR secretary for inter-Christian relations; hegumen Alexy (Sukachev), abbot of the Dormition monastery in the Voronezh diocese; hegumen Ilya (Zhdamirov), abbot of the Resurrection monastery in the Rossosh diocese; hegumen Tikhon (Komarov), abbot of the monastery of St. Seraphim of Sarov in the Borisoglebsk diocese; abbess Yelizaveta (Pozdnyakova) of the Ss. Martha and Mary convent in Moscow; abbess Anna (Morozova) of the Dormition convent in the

Donetsk diocese; abbess Mikhaila (Shevchenko) of the Iberian icon of the Mother of God convent in Donetsk; abbess Varvara (Sazhneva) of St. Alexius convent in Voronezh; abbess Yelena (Zolotukhina) of the Saviour convent in the Rossosh diocese; protodeacons Mikhail Ilchuk and Roman Stepin of the Epiphany Cathedral in Gorlovka; nuns Arsenia (Yakimenko), Alexandra (Vorobyeva) and Alexandra (Zubkova), employees of the Moscow Patriarchate; and Mr. Danil Arakelian, a DECR staff member.

Taking part in the pilgrimage are also hieromonk Daoud el-Anthony, representative of the Coptic Church in Russia; Dr. Anton Milad, adviser to the Coptic Patriarch; Ms. N. Kuskova and Mr. M. Motawaj.

The delegation was met at the Cairo airport by representatives of the Coptic Church.

The pilgrims visited the monastery of St. Macarius the Great located in the Nitrian Desert. It was their first stop in Egypt.

During the pilgrimage, which will last till May 19, they will visit monasteries in the Nitrian Desert, the Lavras of St. Anthony the Great and of St. Paul of Thebes in the Eastern Desert near to the Red Sea, monasteries located in the vicinity of Alexandria, and the holy sites in Christian Cairo.

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