



## DECR chairman meets with President of Lebanon



### **DECR Communication Service, 17/05/2025**

On 16<sup>th</sup> May 2025, Metropolitan Anthony of Volokolamsk, Chairman of the Department for External Church Relations, while in Lebanon with the blessing of His Holiness Patriarch Kirill of Moscow and All Rus', met with the President of the Republic of Lebanon, Mr Michel Aoun. Mr Aoun received the DECR chairman in his official residence in Beirut.

Metropolitan Anthony conveyed to the President warm greetings and kind regards from His Holiness Patriarch Kirill and wished him God's help in his service at the senior government post. As the DECR chairman mentioned, the delegation of the Russian Orthodox Church arrived in Lebanon to take part in the consecration of the Church of the "Unexpected Joy" Icon of the Mother of God in Zahlé. The church, designed in the Russian architectural style, serves as a visible sign of friendship between the peoples of Russia and Lebanon, Metropolitan Anthony noted.

President Aoun pointed out the importance of the church built in the Lebanese land and expressed his joy at the fact that the construction works were over. He also said that in the present-day Lebanon the freedom of worship guaranteed by the country's Constitution is maintained in practice and, thanks to that, local Christians live in relative peace. As a memory gift, President Aoun presented to Metropolitan Anthony a decorative Easter egg.

Taking part in the meeting were also Metropolitan Nifon of Philippopolis, Representative of the Patriarch of Antioch and All the East to the Patriarch of Moscow and All Rus'; Archpriest Nikolai Balashov, Adviser to the Patriarch of Moscow and All Rus'; Archpriest Igor Yakimchuk, DECR Deputy Chairman; and Mr Alexander Rudakov, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Russian Federation to the Republic of Lebanon.

That same day later, Metropolitan Anthony and his travel companions visited Russia's Embassy in Beirut, where they received a warm welcome from Mr Rudakov and his wife.

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