



Metropolitan Anthony of Volokolamsk meets with the head of the Maronite Church



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On 16th May 2025, while in Lebanon with the blessing of His Holiness Patriarch Kirill of Moscow and All Rus', Metropolitan Anthony of Volokolamsk, Chairman of the Department for External Church Relations, met with the Patriarch of the Maronite Catholic Church, Mar Bechara Boutros Cardinal Al-Rai. Patriarch Bechara Boutros received the DECR chairman in his residence in Bkerké.

Metropolitan Anthony was accompanied by 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'; Archimandrite Philip (Vasiltsev), Representative of the Patriarch of Moscow and All Rus' to the Patriarch of Antioch and All the East; Archpriest Igor Yakimchuk, DECR Deputy Chairman; Priest Nikolai Vasin, Secretary to the DECR Chairman; and Mr Alexander Rudakov, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Russian Federation to the Republic of Lebanon.

The participants in the meetings discussed various issues pertaining to inter-Christian cooperation and

the situation of Christians in the Middle East countries, as well as other topics of mutual interest. Metropolitan Anthony conveyed to Patriarch Bechara Boutros warm greetings from His Holiness Patriarch Kirill and told him about the difficulties the Russian Orthodox Church was having in Ukraine and Baltic countries. The head of the Maronite Church congratulated the guests on the completion of construction works at the Church of the “Unexpected Joy” Icon of the Mother of God in Zahlé and on its coming consecration. This event brings joy not only to the Orthodox Christians living in Zahlé, but to all Christians in Lebanon as well, Patriarch Bechara Boutros said, adding that by living in peace and concord with each other Christians make their contribution to the spiritual culture of the Lebanese people.

As a memorable gift, the DECR chairman presented to Cardinal Al-Rai an Easter egg.

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