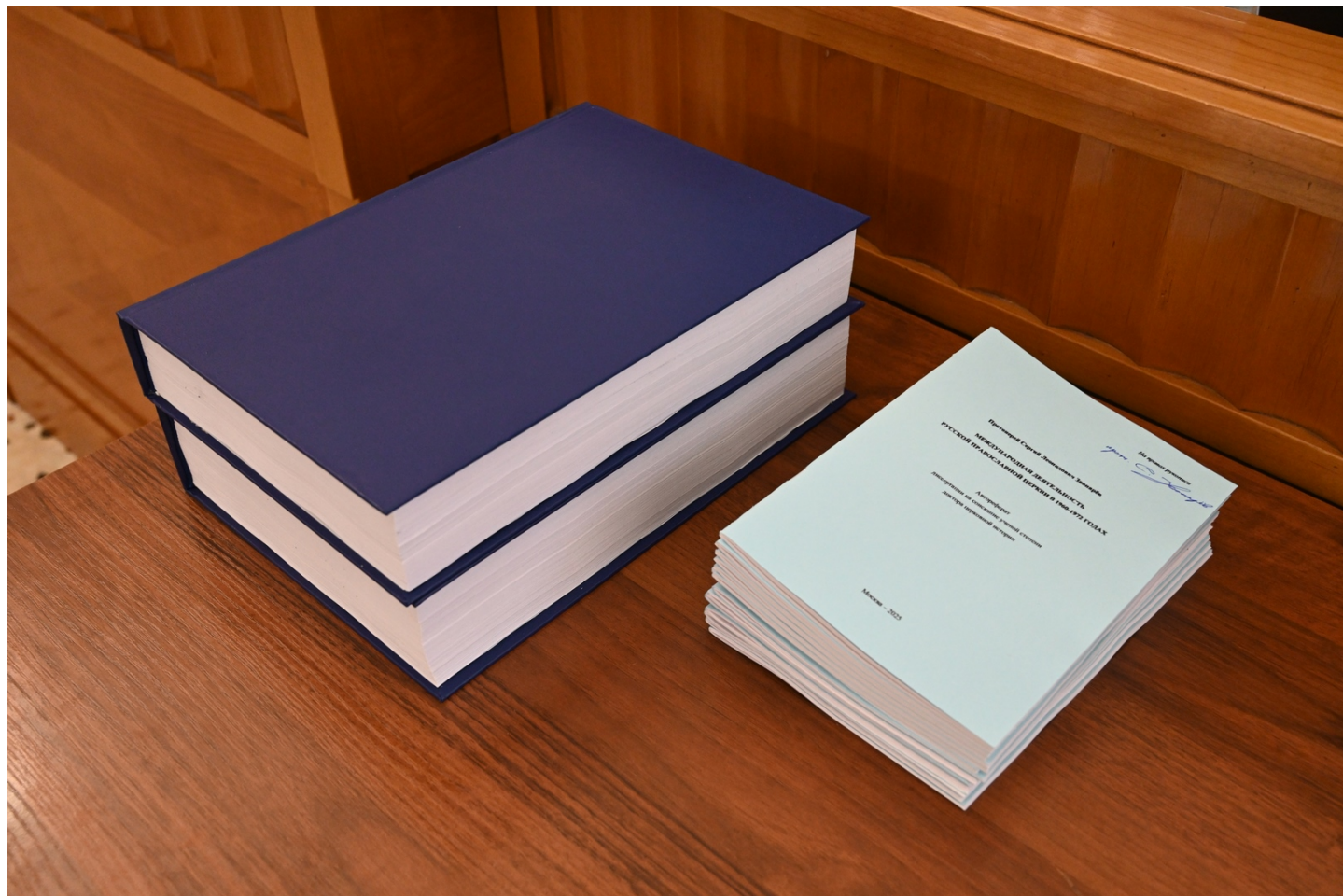




**THE RUSSIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH**  
Department for External Church Relations

## **DECR secretary for affairs of the far abroad archpriest Sergy Zvonaryov defends doctoral dissertation.**



**DECR Communication service, 09.06.2025.**

On 9<sup>th</sup> June 2025 the defense of the doctoral dissertation of the secretary of the Department for External Church Relations for affairs of the far abroad archpriest Sergy Zvonaryov was held at the dissertation council of the Ss. Cyril and Methodius Institute for Post-graduate Studies.

The topic of the dissertation was the international activities of the Russian Orthodox Church between the years 1960 and 1972.

The session took place in the assembly hall of the Ss. Cyril and Methodius Institute for Post-graduate Studies. The format was that of live video link between the participants. In charge of the proceedings was the deputy chairman of the dissertation council of the Institute, doctor of theology and rector of the Kolomna Theological Seminary archpriest Vadim Suvorov.

Among those attending the event were the chairman of the Department for External Church Relations of the Moscow Patriarchate the metropolitan of Volokolamsk Anthony, the chairman of the study committee of the Russian Orthodox Church and rector of the Ss. Cyril and Methodius Institute for Post-graduate Studies archpriest Maxim Kozlov, advisor to the Patriarch of Moscow and All Rus' archpriest Nikolai Balashov, deputy chairmen of the DECR archimandrite Philaret (Bulekov) and archpriest Igor Yakimchuk and DECR secretary for international relations Father Ilya Kashitsyn.

After the doctoral candidate's speech his supervisor and doctor of church history, professor and head of the doctoral department of the Institute archpriest Alexei Marchenko also spoke.

The secretary for studies of the council, doctor of church history, candidate of historical sciences, professor for general and Russian church history and canonical law at Saint Tikhon's Orthodox Humanitarian University V. I. Petrushko read aloud the review of the dissertation by the Moscow Theological Academy.

After this, the examiners also spoke. The examiners were: doctor of historical sciences, professor, academician of the Russian Academy of Sciences, emeritus scholar of the Russian Federation and President of the Russian Academy for Education O. Yu. Vasilieva; doctor of theology, doctor of church history, head researcher and deputy head of the department of the modern history of the Russian Orthodox Church at Saint Tikhon's Orthodox Humanitarian University, professor of general and Russian church history and canon law at STOBU Father Alexander Mazyrin; and doctor of historical sciences, professor, corresponding member of the Russian Academy of Education, head of the South Urals scientific centre of the Russian Academy of Education at the South Urals State Humanitarian and Pedagogical University T. A. Chumachenko.

The chairman of the Department for External Church Relations of the Moscow Patriarchate the metropolitan of Volokolamsk Anthony noted the importance of the topic treated in his scholarly work by archpriest Sergiy Zvonaryov. The work allows one to study in greater depth one of the most complex periods in the history of the Russian Orthodox Church and the labours of such outstanding church hierarchs as metropolitan Nikodim (Rotov). The metropolitan stated that the present monograph added important pages to the chronicle of the Department for External Church Relations just before the 80<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the founding of this Synodal institution in 1946.

The chairman of the study committee of the Russian Orthodox Church and rector of the Ss. Cyril and Methodius Institute for Post-graduate Studies archpriest Maxim Kozlov in his speech emphasized that the work of archpriest Sergiy Zvonaryov was testimony to "the scientific and practical links and interactions which have historically existed and which are today continued by the Department of

External Church Relations with the Ss. Cyril and Methodius Institute for Post-graduate Studies. The scholarly profile of external church relations, which nowhere today is embodied in any of our institutes of higher learning and is therefore unique, has great importance for us. And Father Sergy's work is testimony to its relevance and vitality."

Following the discussion and a secret vote, the Institute's doctoral dissertational council under the Russian Orthodox Church resolved to petition His Holiness the Patriarch of Moscow and All Rus' Kirill to award archpriest Sergey Zvonaryov with the scholarly degree of doctor of church history.

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Source: <https://mospat.ru/en/news/93316/>