



Metropolitan Anthony of Volokolamsk took part in the celebrations marking the 100th anniversary of the metochion in Hebron.



DECR Communication service, 23.10.2025

On October 22, 2025, the feast day of the Righteous Forefather Abraham and his nephew Lot, the Chairman of the Moscow Patriarchate's Department for External Church Relations, Metropolitan Anthony of Volokolamsk, who is on a working visit to Israel with the blessing of His Holiness Patriarch Kirill of Moscow and All Rus', participated in the celebrations marking the 100th anniversary of the consecration of the church of the Russian Ecclesiastical Mission's metochion in honor of the Holy Forefathers in Hebron.

The Divine Liturgy at the metochion was led by His Beatitude Patriarch Theophilos III of the Holy City of Jerusalem and All Palestine, who was concelebrated by hierarchs of the Jerusalem Church: Metropolitan Isychios of Kapitolias, Archbishop Aristarchos of Constantina, and Metropolitan Makarios

of Ptolemais, as well as clergy of the Jerusalem Patriarchate. His Beatitude was concelebrated by representatives of the Russian Orthodox Church: Metropolitan Anthony of Volokolamsk, Bishop Aleksey of Galich and Makaryev, the head of the Russian Ecclesiastical Mission in Jerusalem, Archimandrite Vassian (Zmeev), Advisor to the Patriarch of Moscow and All Rus', Archpriest Nikolay Balashov, Deputy-Chairmen of the Department for External Church Relations, Archimandrite Philaret (Bulekov) and Archpriest Igor Yakimchuk, the head of the Russian Ecclesiastical Mission in the jurisdiction of the Church Abroad, Archimandrite Roman (Krasovsky), the Secretary to the Chairman of the Department for External Church Relations, Priest Nikolay Vasin, members of the Russian Ecclesiastical Mission in Jerusalem in holy orders, and clergymen who had arrived in the Holy Land as pilgrims.

Among those praying in the church were the abbesses of three Russian convents in Jerusalem: Abbess Ekaterina (Chernysheva) of the Gorny Convent in Ein Karem, Abbess Elizaveta (Shmelts) of Gethsemane, and Abbess Iudif (Zastavskaya) of the Ascension Convent on the Mount of Olives, together with sisters from their communities, as well as the senior sister of the Bethany Orthodox School, Nun Maria (Wall).

The Ambassador of the Russian Federation to Israel, A.D. Viktorov, and his wife, representatives of the state authorities of the Palestinian National Authority, and numerous pilgrims were present at the service.

The hymns of the Divine Liturgy were performed by a combined choir of sisters from the Gorny Convent.

The service was celebrated in Church Slavonic, Greek, and Arabic.

Upon the conclusion of the Divine Liturgy, His Beatitude Patriarch Theophilos addressed the congregation with a welcoming speech, in which he noted, in particular: "The grace of the Holy Triune God has gathered us all in this holy place near the Oak of Mamre, where the Lord God appeared to the Patriarch Abraham, so that in divine Eucharistic communion we might mark the centenary of this sacred temple in the name of the Holy Forefathers, built on the ruins of an ancient church from the Constantinian era by Archimandrite Leonid (Sentsov), the head of the Russian Ecclesiastical Mission in Jerusalem, and consecrated by our predecessor, His Beatitude Patriarch Damianos, in 1925... It is wondrous that this place where we stand... preserves its ancient holiness through the care and assistance of the Russian Orthodox Church, the sister of Jerusalem."

Addressing the Primate of the Jerusalem Orthodox Church with words of gratitude, Archimandrite Vassian (Zmeev) noted that the city of Hebron has today become a place of prayerful celebration and spiritual unity for many faithful people who belong to different cultures and traditions but firmly preserve

the true faith in the one God. Concluding his welcoming speech, the head of the Russian Ecclesiastical Mission presented His Beatitude Patriarch Theophilos and Metropolitan Anthony of Volokolamsk with commemorative gifts: icons of the Holy Trinity and a panagia.

Then, His Beatitude Patriarch Theophilos, accompanied by hierarchs, clergy, and pilgrims, led a procession to the Oak of Mamre, where a service of thanksgiving was celebrated.

After the service, the guests were invited to a meal. Among the honored guests was the Governor of the Hebron Province, Khalid Doudin, who greeted all those present on behalf of the head of the Palestinian National Authority, Mahmoud Abbas.

During the festive lunch, Metropolitan Anthony, on behalf of His Holiness Patriarch Kirill of Moscow and All Rus', warmly thanked His Beatitude Patriarch Theophilos for his constant care and attention to the Russian pilgrims arriving in the Holy Land, a vivid testimony of which was His Beatitude's participation in the celebration of the centenary of the consecration of the Church of the Holy Forefathers in Hebron.

Then, the DECR Chairman presented Patriarchal awards to clergy, monastics, and staff of the Russian Ecclesiastical Mission for their diligent service to the benefit of the Russian Orthodox Church.

The plot of land in Hebron, located in the area where, according to tradition, the Old Testament patriarch Abraham offered hospitality to the three Angels who foretold the birth of his son, was acquired by the head of the Russian Ecclesiastical Mission in Jerusalem, Archimandrite Antonin (Kapustin), in 1868.

In 1871, the first Divine Liturgy was celebrated on the site. In 1884, it was visited by Patriarch Nikodimos of Jerusalem and Patriarch Ioakeim III of Constantinople, who blessed the construction of a church on this site. In 1925, the church was consecrated by Patriarch Damianos of Jerusalem.

Source: <https://mospat.ru/en/news/93692/>