



## Students from Coptic Church arrive in Russia to begin studies at Smolensk Seminary



**DECR Communication Service, 10/12/2025**

On 9<sup>th</sup> December 2025, two representatives of the Coptic Church – Hierodeacon Maximus Al-Anba Paula of the Monastery of St. Paul of Thebes in the Eastern Desert and Hierodeacon Bizanty Anba-Bishoy of the Monastery of St. Bishoy the Great in Wadi El Natrun – arrived in Russia to begin their studies at the Smolensk Orthodox Theological Seminary.

An agreement regarding the enrolment of the Coptic students at the Smolensk Seminary had been reached between His Holiness Patriarch Kirill of Moscow and All Rus' and His Holiness Coptic Patriarch Tawadros II at the suggestion of the Commission for Dialogue between the Russian Orthodox Church

and the Coptic Orthodox Church. From February to November 2025, Hierodeacon Maximus Al-Anba Paula and Hierodeacon Bizanty Anba-Bishoy completed an online introductory course of the Russian language prepared for them by the Smolensk Seminary with assistance from the Department for External Church Relations of the Moscow Patriarchate.

Other students from the Coptic Church are studying at or have already graduated from the Moscow and St. Petersburg Theological Academies. Various academic projects are being carried out by the Sts. Cyril and Methodius Theological Institute of Postgraduate Studies within the framework of cooperation with the Coptic Church.

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Source: <https://mospat.ru/en/news/93832/>