



His Holiness Patriarch Kirill celebrates Great Vespers for the feast of the Nativity of Christ at the Christ the Saviour Cathedral.



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In the evening of 7th January 2026 on the feast day of the Nativity in the Flesh of Our Lord and God and Saviour Jesus Christ, His Holiness the Patriarch of Moscow and Of all Rus' Kirill celebrated Great Vespers at the Christ the Saviour Cathedral in Moscow.

Concelebrating with His Holiness were: metropolitan Juvenaly (Poyarkov); the metropolitan of Krutitsk and Kolomna Paul, the Patriarchal auxiliary for the Moscow metropolitanate; the metropolitan of Voskresensk Gregory, the chancellor of the Moscow Patriarchy, first auxiliary bishop to the Patriarch of Moscow and Of all Rus' for the city of Moscow and vicar abbot of New Saviour's monastery; the metropolitan of Volokolamsk Anthony, the chairman of the Department for External Church Relations of the Moscow Patriarchate; the metropolitan of Kashira Theognostus, chairman of the Synodal

Department for Monasteries and Monastic Life and vicar abbot of the Donskoi stavropegial monastery; the metropolitan of Zvenigorod Arsenius; the archbishop of Odintsovo and Krasnogorsk Thomas, director of the administrative secretariat of the Moscow Patriarchy; the archbishop of Podolsk and Lyubertsy Axius; the archbishop of Zelenograd Sabba, chairman of the Synodal Department for Mission and deputy chancellor of the Moscow Patriarchy; bishop Gurius (Shalamov); the bishop of Serpukhov Roman, deputy abbot of the Vysotsky stavropegial monastery; bishop Jerome (Chernyshov); the bishop of Balashikha and Orekhovo-Zuyevo Nicholas, director and editor-in-chief of the publishing house of the Moscow Patriarchate; the bishop of Pavlov Posad Siluanus, deputy chancellor of the Moscow Patriarchy; the bishop of Istra Seraphim, chairman of the Synodal Department for Youth Affairs; the bishop of Sergiev Posad and Dmitrov Cyril, deputy abbot of the Monastery of the Holy Trinity and Saint Sergius and rector of the Moscow Theological Academy; the bishop of Ramenskoye Alexis, personal secretary to His Holiness Patriarch Kirill; the bishop of Yegorievsk Methodius, acting chairman of the Synodal Bible and Theology Commission, rector of the Saint Tikhon Orthodox Humanitarian University and vicar abbot of the Saint Nicholas of Ugresh stavropegial monastery; the bishop of Bronnitsy John, vicar abbot of the St. Peter Vysoko stavropegial monastery; protopresbyter Vladimir Divakov, secretary to His Holiness the Patriarch of Moscow and Of all Rus' Kirill for the city of Moscow; archpriest Mikhail Ryazantsev, sacristan of the Christ the Saviour Cathedral; archpriest Nikolai Balashov, advisor to the Patriarch of Moscow and Of all Rus'; archpriest Maxim Kozlov, chairman of the study committee of the Russian Orthodox Church; archimandrite Philaret (Bulekov), deputy chairman of the DECR of the Moscow Patriarchate; archpriest Igor Yakimchuk, deputy chairman of the DECR of the Moscow Patriarchate; archimandrite Stephan (Tarakanov), deputy chairman of the Synodal Department for Monasteries and the Monastic Life and deputy abbot of the Saint Sabbas of Storozha stavropegial monastery; archpriest Dionisy Kazantsev, secretary to the Patriarch of Moscow and Of all Rus' for the Moscow region; Father Kirill Markovsky, chairman of the Synodal Department for Prison Ministry; Father Vasily Losev, director of the secretariat of the All-Russian Popular Assembly and director of the legal service of the Moscow metropolitanate; area deans of the city of Moscow and its clergy.

Among those concelebrating were representatives of the Local Orthodox Churches to the Patriarchal Throne of Moscow: the metropolitan of Philippopolis Niphon (Greek Orthodox Church of Antioch); the bishop of Remesiana Stefan (Serbian Orthodox Church); archimandrite Seraphim (the Orthodox Church of the Czech Lands and Slovakia); and archpriest Daniel Andrejuk (the Orthodox Church in America)

Praying at the service were: the chairman of the Synodal Department for Relations with the Media and Society Vladimir Legoida; mother superiors of the stavropegial convents of Moscow, clergy from the city of Moscow, members of parish councils from the capital's churches, workers at the Synodal institutions and many of the faithful.

The hymns for Great Vespers were sung by the choir of the Christ the Saviour Cathedral under choir

master Ilya Tolkachev.

The Patriarchal service was broadcast live on the TV Tsentr, Spas and Soyuz television channels, as well as on the official portal of the Russian Orthodox Church Patriarchia.ru. The commentator for the broadcast was professor of the Moscow Theological Academy A. K. Svetozarsky.

The Gospel reading was proclaimed by the Primate of the Russian Orthodox Church from an ancient liturgical Gospel book from the times of empress Elizabeth Petrovna which is brought out from the sanctuary of the Christ the Saviour twice a year at the Great Vespers for the Nativity of Christ and Pascha.

At the conclusion of the service metropolitan Juvenaly (Poyarkov) congratulated His Holiness Patriarch Kirill on the occasion of the feast of the Nativity Christ on behalf of the Holy Synod of the Russian Orthodox Church.

“Your Holiness, Most Holy Master and Father! Holy Russia today celebrates the Nativity of Our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ and we, the bishops and your God-saved flock with spiritual joy mark in this cathedral this great event,” said, in particular, metropolitan Juvenaly. “The Holy Church, in rendering thanksgiving to our Lord and Saviour, today blesses us, the unworthy ones, to express to You, Your Holiness, our love and our festive congratulations. Thank you, Your Holiness, on behalf of all those here present and worshiping, on behalf of all our Church, for your self-sacrificing ministry.”

Having wished the Primate a prosperous and peaceful life, health and furtherance in all good things, metropolitan Juvenaly presented His Holiness with a gift of an antique icon of the Saviour and bouquet of white roses.

On behalf of the Orthodox young people of the capital, members of the Ladder to Heaven Orthodox youth association based at the Church of All Saints at Sokol in Moscow Maiya Yermolova, Yevgeny Doronin, Alexander Shutov and Maria Korostyleva congratulated His Holiness on the feast day.

His Holiness Patriarch Kirill then delivered his Primatial homily to all those gathered.

Then, according to tradition, the bishops, clergy and laity of the diocese of the city of Moscow congratulated their ruling hierarch.

In the space beyond the sanctuary of the cathedral His Holiness the Patriarch of Moscow and Of all Rus' spoke with Viktor Konovalov from the town of Millerovo in the Rostov region. Viktor was born an invalid in 2009 without arms and was rejected by his mother. He was adopted by Natalia Ivanovna

Muzentinova into a family of five children and forty-four adopted children. Viktor is a multi-champion of the Rostov region in various sports in his age category. He is a three-times champion in swimming and a five-times champion in karate. He sings in the choir of the Church of the Great Martyr and Healer Panteleimon in the town of Millerovo in the diocese of Shakhty. His Holiness Patriarch Kirill had a conversation with Viktor, blessed him and presented him with presents, reports the press-service of the Patriarch of Moscow and Of all Rus'.

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