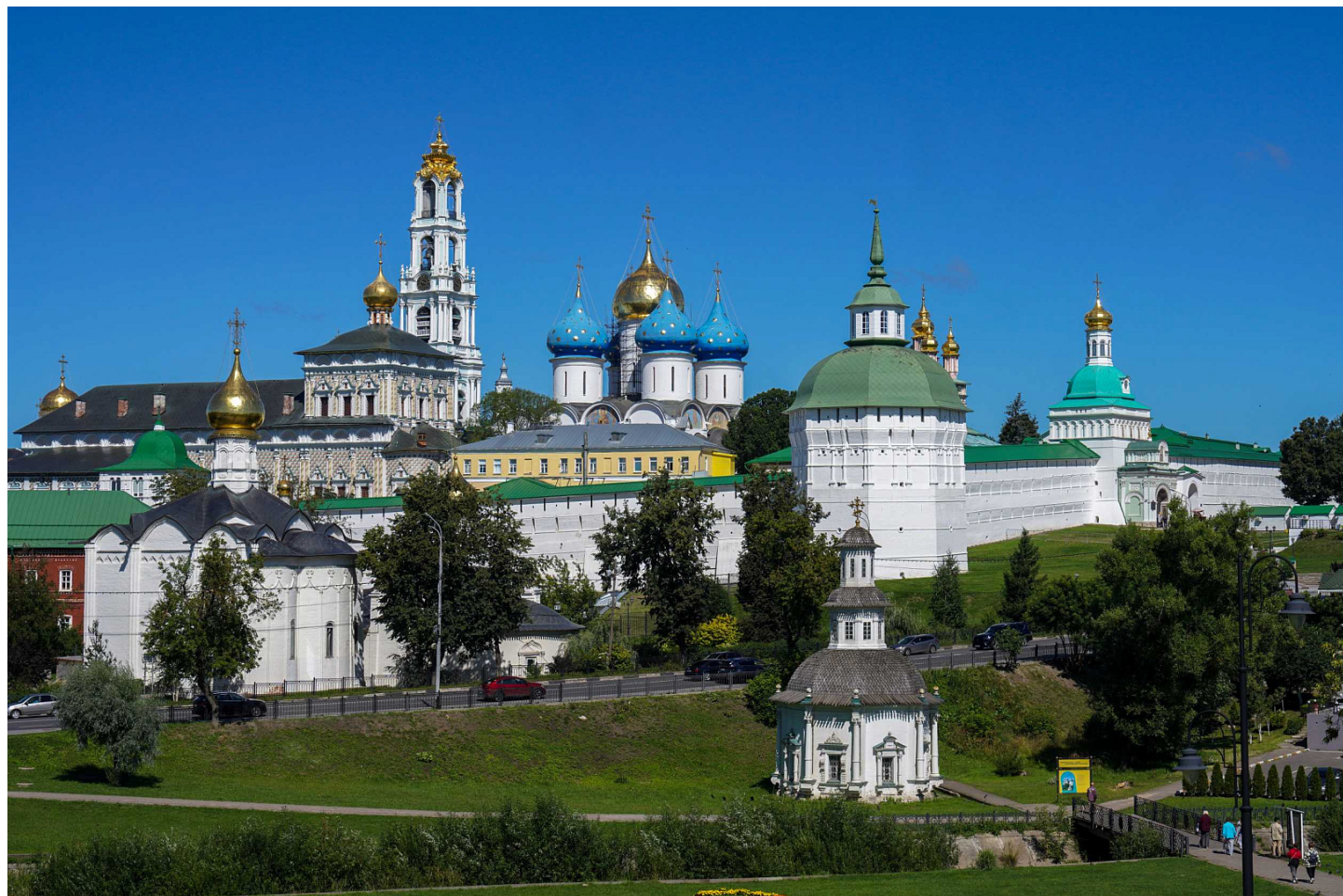




On Commemoration Day of St. Sergius of Radonezh, Primate of Russian Church Celebrates Liturgy in Holy Trinity and St. Sergius Lavra



DECR Communication Service, 18/07/2026

On 18th July 2026, the commemoration day of the uncovering of the relics of the Venerable Sergius of Radonezh, His Holiness Patriarch Kirill of Moscow and All Rus' celebrated the Divine Liturgy in Cathedral Square of the Holy Trinity and St. Sergius Lavra in front of a revered icon of St. Sergius. Earlier, for that occasion, a platform had been installed in Cathedral Square, with an altar table placed under a canopy in front of the Holy Dormition Cathedral, **reports** of the Patriarchal Press Service.

Among His Holiness's concelebrants were: Metropolitan Vikenty of Tashkent and Uzbekistan, Head of the Central Asia Metropolitan Area; Metropolitan Varsonofy of St. Petersburg and Ladoga; Metropolitan Pavel of Krutitsy and Kolomna, Patriarchal Vicar for the Moscow Metropolia; Metropolitan Veniamin of Minsk and Zaslavl, Patriarchal Exarch of All Belarus; Metropolitan Grigory of Voskresensk, Chancellor

of the Moscow Patriarchate, Patriarchal First Vicar for the city of Moscow, Father Superior of the Novospassky Stavropegic Monastery; Metropolitan Anthony of Volokolamsk, Chairman of the Department for External Church Relations; Metropolitan Nikandr of Vladimir and Suzdal, Chairman of the Finance and Economic Administration of the Moscow Patriarchate; Metropolitan Feognost of Kashira, Chairman of the Synodal Department for Monasteries and Monasticism, Father Superior of the Donskoy Stavropegic Monastery; Bishop Kirill of Sergiyev Posad and Dmitrov, Father Superior of the Holy Trinity and St. Sergius Lavra, Rector of the Moscow Theological Academy; Bishop Alexy of Ramenskoye, Personal Secretary to His Holiness Patriarch Kirill; and an assembly of hierarchs of the Russian Orthodox Church.

Taking part in the divine service were also hierarchs and clerics of the Local Orthodox Churches, namely, Metropolitan Niphon of Philippopolis, Representative of the Patriarch of Antioch and All the East to the Patriarch of Moscow and All Rus'; Bishop Stefan of Remesiana, Representative of the Serbian Patriarch to the Patriarch of Moscow and All Rus'; Archimandrite Seraphim (Shemyatovsky), Representative of the Orthodox Church of the Czech Lands and Slovakia to the Moscow Patriarchal Throne; and Archpriest Daniel Andrejuk, Representative of the Orthodox Church in America.

Among His Holiness's con-celebrants were also Archimandrite Makary (Veretennikov), member of the Spiritual Board of the Holy Trinity and St. Sergius Lavra; Protopresbyter Vladimir Divakov, Patriarchal Secretary for the city of Moscow; Archpriest Dionisy Kazantsev, Patriarchal Secretary for the Moscow Region; Priest Vasily Losev, Head of the Secretariat of the World Russian People's Council and Head of the Legal Service of the Moscow Metropolia; the Lavra's ordained coenobites and the Moscow clergy.

Attending the Liturgy were, among others, Mr L.Ye. Slutsky, Leader of the Liberal Democratic Party of Russia, Chairman of Russia's State Duma Committee on International Affairs; Mr S.A. Pakhomov, Chairman of the State Duma Committee on Construction and Housing, Executive Secretary of the Board of Trustees of the Foundation for the Preservation, Reconstruction of the Historical Image, and Development of Sergiyev Posad; cosmonaut and Hero of Russia Ye.O. Serova; Ms O.V. Yerokhanova, Head of the Sergiyev Posad Urban District; Mr V.V. Mikhaylov, First Deputy Managing Director of the Russian Railways; Mr S.Yu. Rudov, Deputy Head of the World Russian People's Council; Mr V.A. Levin, Acting General Director of "Sofrino" Art Production Enterprise; Mr Ye.O. Blagov, Head of the "Russky Krest" Charity Foundation; and Mr I.S. Kharkov, Head of the "Apostol" Jewellery Workshop.

In prayerful attendance were also Hegumenness Sergiya (Konkova), Mother Superior of the Holy Trinity and St. Seraphim Convent in Diveyevo; Hegumenness Viktorina (Perminova), Mother Superior of the Stavropegic Convent of the Nativity of the Most Holy Theotokos in Moscow; Hegumenness Juliania (Kaleda), Mother Superior of the Stavropegic Convent of the Conception of the Mother of God by Righteous Anna in Moscow, Deputy Chair of the Synodal Department for Monasteries and Monasticism;

Hegumenness Olimpiada (Baranova), Mother Superior of the Stavropegic Convent of the Protection of the Most Holy Mother of God in Khotkovo; Hegumenness Yelisaveta (Nikishkina), Mother Superior of the Stavropegic Convent of St. John the Baptist in Moscow; abbesses and sisters of other convents and numerous pilgrims.

Present at the divine service was a delegation of the Patriarchal Exarchate of South-East Asia from Indonesia and Malaysia. The delegation had arrived in Russia to undertake a pilgrimage to holy sites of the Russian Orthodox Church, take part in divine services, visit various centres of historical and spiritual importance and strengthen brotherly ties between the Russian Orthodox Church's communities in South-East Asia and Russia. The delegation consisted of representatives of Orthodox Christian communities from Indonesia and Malaysia, including clerics of the Diocese of Singapore.

Liturgical hymns were performed by the Combined Choir of the Holy Trinity–St. Sergius Lavra and the Moscow Theological Academy, conducted by Hieromonk Nestor (Volkov).

The Patriarchal Liturgy was broadcast live by the “Soyuz” and “Spas” TV channels, as well as on the official website of the Russian Orthodox Church – **patriarchia.ru**.

During the Litany of Fervent Supplication, His Holiness Patriarch Kirill read the Prayer for the Holy Rus’.

Hieromonk Dalmat (Yudin), a cenobite of the Holy Trinity and St. Sergius Lavra, delivered a sermon before the communion.

After the Liturgy, His Holiness Patriarch Kirill, members of the Holy Synod of the Russian Orthodox Church and the assembled hierarchs lifted up prayers to St. Sergius the Hegumen of the Russian Land.

Then, His Holiness proceeded to the Holy Trinity Cathedral, where he venerated St. Sergius's relics and the Icon of the Holy Trinity painted by the Venerable Andrew Rublev.

At the entrance to the Patriarchal Chambers, His Holiness was greeted by representatives of the Orthodox Youth Association who presented His Holiness with “The Good Silence” icon.

From the balcony of the Patriarchal Chambers, the Primate of the Russian Orthodox Church addressed the participants in the celebrations. His Primatial homily reads as follows:

“Your Eminences and Your Graces, dear Vladykas, Fathers, Mothers the Abbesses, Brothers and Sisters,

“I wholeheartedly greet you on this great day when we glorify the power of God which manifests itself in weakness (cf. 2 Cor 12:9).

“We especially feel it at this place associated with the Venerable Sergius of Radonezh. St. Sergius was neither an outstanding thinker nor a military commander. He had no special human powers but, having settled in a forest here, he gained such great spiritual strength that the high and mighty, military commanders and multitudes of common people started flocking to him.

“So, what kind of power did he have that attracted people? Why was it that many politicians with material, political, military power did not equal the Venerable Sergius in their influence on people? It was because the power of God is stronger than human power. Saint Sergius gained the divine power by his ascetic life, his humility, his prayer, his total devotion to the Lord and Saviour. And so, the high and mighty flowed into these Radonezh woods in order to receive the saint’s blessing. We know that Dmitry Donskoy came to receive his blessing before the terrible battle that had existential significance for our country.

“That said, what happened later, in the 20th century, probably became the best and most important proof of St. Sergius’s special spiritual power. The theomachist authorities closed and plundered the Lavra, turning this place of worship into a place of renunciation of God. The things that happened here! Perhaps, those in power thought that under no circumstances the Orthodox faith could revive in our country, let alone monastic life in this holy Lavra. Once again, I emphasize that the powerful Soviet state spared no effort to achieve those goals – and failed.

“The Venerable Sergius – an elder who lived in seclusion – proved to be stronger than the military superpower which failed to make people turn away from God, from the Church, from this holy place.

“Why have I decided to talk about it? We are living in very good times when there are no persecutions against the Church, when many senior statespersons in Russia are professing the Orthodox faith, when monasteries and churches are thriving, when the Basics of Orthodox Culture are being taught at schools, when children are being raised in Orthodoxy.

“Of course, we should thank God for these good times. Yet, if we look back at our history, we can notice a certain pattern: good times would give way to times of great danger for the Church. Russia is a perfect example of that. The Russian Empire – a great mighty Orthodox empire – fell, collapsed, and what came next were attempts to build an atheistic state in its place.

“To ensure that it will never happen again, that people of their free will and based on their beliefs will

come to churches, participate in divine services and sacraments, raise their children and grandchildren in the Orthodox faith, we must never forget about the personal responsibility that we as Orthodox Christians have not only for our own life and preservation of our faith, but also, when it comes to parents and grandparents, for passing it down to our children and grandchildren.

“This is my call to you, my dears. Each of us should be aware of our responsibility for the life of the Orthodox Church to continue – in our families, in our children and grandchildren and, certainly, in our country. Special responsibility rests with those Orthodox believers who are in power, as well as those engaged in pedagogy and education. All those who can influence other people, especially the youth, must be fully aware of the responsibility of the current generation for the Orthodox faith to be preserved in our great Homeland.

“Through the prayers of the saints who shone forth in the Russian land and especially through the prayers of our Venerable Father Sergius, Hegumen of Radonezh and Wonderworker, may the Lord preserve our Homeland in unity and like-mindedness, free from any dangerous outside influences, let alone outside enslavement!

“Today, we ask St. Sergius to beseech God to show His mercy for our Homeland, our people, our youth, so that the strong faith in our Lord and Saviour may be preserved and the memory of the Venerable Sergius may live in historical and spiritual conscience of our people. Thus we will uphold both our faith and our country. We will preserve our country if we preserve our faith and, of course, the Russian Orthodox Church – a martyr and confessor – which by the selfless deeds of its children proved its faithfulness to the Saviour and St. Sergius’s behests. May the Lord protect us all by his prayers! Amen!”

Traditionally, on the commemoration day of St. Sergius of Radonezh, hierarchical divine services were also celebrated in churches of the Moscow Theological Schools and the Holy Trinity and St. Sergius Lavra. Officiating at the Divine Liturgy in the academic Church of the Intercession of the Most Holy Theotokos was Metropolitan Leontiy of Voronezh and Liski.

After the Liturgy, the Primate of the Russian Church met with a delegation of the Patriarchal Exarchate of South-East Asia. The meeting took place in the Church of St. Philaret the Merciful at the Lavra’s Patriarchal Chambers.

It was followed by a ceremony in the Throne Hall of the Patriarchal Chambers, during which ecclesiastical awards were presented.

Photo by the Press Service of the Patriarch of Moscow and All Rus’

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