

Metropolitan Nektarios of Corfu visits Russia



DECR Communication service, 30.08.2026.

From August 17 to 24, at the invitation of His Holiness Patriarch Kirill of Moscow and All Rus' and with the blessing of the Holy Synod of the Church of Greece, Metropolitan Nektarios of Corfu, Paxos and the Diapontian Islands visited Russia on a pilgrimage. One of the purposes of the visit was to bring the right hand of St Spyridon of Trimythous to Russia for veneration by the faithful.

The Greek delegation also included clergy and staff members of the Metropolis of Corfu: Archimandrite Dositheos (Papamitros); Protopresbyter Georgios Vlachos, Rector of the Cathedral Church of St Spyridon in Corfu and custodian of the relics of St Spyridon of Trimythous; Archdeacon Eusebius (Pandis); P. Spiridonidis; K. Fimis, Secretary of the Metropolis of Corfu; S. Agathos, a member of the Parish Council of the Cathedral Church of St Spyridon in Corfu; Y. Stojkovic and F. Ntalas.

The delegation was accompanied by Priest Vasily Kovalchuk, Secretary of the Commission of the

Russian Orthodox Church for the Development of Pilgrimage and the Bringing of Relics, as well as Priest Anatoly Churyakov and Hieromonk Mark (Akhmatkhanov), staff members of the Department for External Church Relations of the Moscow Patriarchate.

At Sheremetyevo Airport, the Greek delegation was welcomed by Metropolitan Gregory of Voskresensk, Chancellor of the Moscow Patriarchate, together with clergy from Moscow.

At the Intercession Stavropegic Convent, which served as the delegation's residence in Moscow, Metropolitan Nektarios and those accompanying him were warmly received by the convent's abbess, Abbess Theophania (Miskina), and the sisters.

On August 18, Metropolitan Anthony of Volokolamsk, Chairman of the Department for External Church Relations of the Moscow Patriarchate, met with the Greek hierarch at the DECR.

On August 19, the Feast of the Transfiguration of the Lord, Metropolitan Nektarios and the clergy accompanying him concelebrated with His Holiness Patriarch Kirill of Moscow and All Rus' at the Divine Liturgy in the Cathedral of Christ the Saviour. At the conclusion of the service, in recognition of his contribution to strengthening friendly relations between the Russian and Greek Orthodox Churches, Metropolitan Nektarios was awarded the Order of St Seraphim of Sarov, 2nd Class, of the Russian Orthodox Church. In turn, the Greek hierarch read out an address and presented the Primate of the Russian Orthodox Church with the highest award of the Metropolis of Corfu – the Order of the "Golden Cross with the Star of St Spyridon".

That same evening, the delegation of the Church of Greece visited the Zachatyevsky Stavropegic Convent in Moscow, where they were received by its abbess, Abbess Juliana (Kaleda), and the sisters.

On August 20, the Greek delegation travelled from Moscow to the Chuvash Republic on a special flight. At the aircraft ramp of A.G. Nikolaev International Airport in Cheboksary, Metropolitan Savvaty of Cheboksary and Chuvashia, Bishop Stephen of Kanash and Belye Vody, Bishop Theodosius of Alatyr and Batyrev, Head of the Administration of the Head of the Chuvash Republic V.A. Borisov, Minister of Culture, Nationalities and Archival Affairs of the Chuvash Republic S.A. Kalikova, and clergy of the Chuvash Metropolis welcomed the right hand of St Spyridon and the accompanying delegation.

A solemn reception of the reliquary containing the right hand of St Spyridon the Wonderworker then took place at the Vvedensky Cathedral in Cheboksary. Metropolitan Nektarios of Corfu and Metropolitan Savvaty of Cheboksary and Chuvashia, concelebrating with bishops and clergy of the Chuvash Metropolis, presided over a service of prayer and supplication.

During the day, the delegation visited the Saviour-Transfiguration Convent, where the guests were received by Abbess Sergia (Ruzavina) and the sisters, as well as the Holy Trinity Monastery, where they were welcomed by the monastery's abbot, Archimandrite Vasily (Pasquier), and the monastics.

In the evening, the visiting delegation, together with the hierarchs and clergy of the Chuvash Metropolis, attended a reception hosted by Head of the Chuvash Republic Oleg Nikolaev in honour of the bringing of the right hand of St Spyridon to the region. Among those attending were Andrei Aksakov, Chairman of the State Duma Committee on the Financial Market; State Duma Deputy A.L. Salaeva; deputies of the State Council and members of the Cabinet of Ministers of the Chuvash Republic; and public figures.

On August 21, Metropolitan Nektarios of Corfu and Metropolitan Savvaty of Cheboksary and Chuvashia presided over the Divine Liturgy at the Vvedensky Cathedral. Their Eminences were concelebrated by Bishops Stephen and Theodosius, members of the Greek delegation and those accompanying them, clergy of the Chuvash Metropolis, and visiting clergy.

At the conclusion of the Liturgy, Metropolitan Savvaty once again welcomed Metropolitan Nektarios on behalf of the hierarchs, clergy and all those who had taken part in the service, thanking him for the joy of prayerful fellowship.

By decree of the head of the Chuvash Metropolis, in recognition of his many years of devoted service for the good of the Holy Church and in connection with the bringing of the right hand of St Spyridon of Trimythous to the Diocese of Cheboksary, Metropolitan Nektarios was awarded the Medal of the Three Hierarchs of Kazan: Saints Gurias, Germanus and Varsonofiy – 1st Class.

Metropolitan Nektarios addressed Bishop Savvaty in response, congratulating him on his name day. In connection with the bringing of the right hand of St Spyridon of Trimythous to Chuvashia, Metropolitan Savvaty also awarded the following persons: A.V. Karmakov, Chairman of the Board of Directors of Regional Energy Company LLC, the Medal of the Three Hierarchs of Kazan: Saints Gurias, Germanus and Varsonofiy – 1st Class; P. Spiridonidis, Assistant to the Head of the Metropolis of Corfu, the Medal of the Diocese of Cheboksary and Chuvashia of St Martyr Abraham of Bulgaria, 2nd Class; and Hieromonk Mark (Akhmatkhanov), a staff member of the DECR, the Medal of the Diocese of Cheboksary and Chuvashia of St Martyr Abraham of Bulgaria, 3rd Class.

During the day, a farewell ceremony for the holy relic began with a procession from the Vvedensky Cathedral along the "Road to the Church" to the River Port of Cheboksary. Upon the arrival of the procession at the River Port, a service of prayer and supplication was held before St Spyridon the Wonderworker.

On August 21, the delegation arrived in the capital of Tatarstan. At the Kazan River Port, the holy relic and the guests were welcomed by Metropolitan Kirill of Kazan and Tatarstan. Also taking part in the welcoming ceremony were Y. Kamatylov, Deputy Chairman of the State Council of the Republic of Tatarstan; D. Kalinkin, First Deputy Head of the Kazan Municipal Formation; and clergy of the Kazan Diocese.

The reliquary containing the relics was then taken, accompanied by hierarchs and clergy, to the Cathedral of the Kazan Icon of the Mother of God at the Kazan-Bogoroditsky Monastery, where a solemn service of prayer and supplication was held.

On August 22, Rais of Tatarstan Rustam Minnikhanov met with Metropolitan Nektarios at the Government House of the Republic of Tatarstan. Metropolitan Kirill of Kazan and Tatarstan and Head of the Administration of the Rais of the Republic of Tatarstan A. Safarov also took part in the meeting. Rustam Minnikhanov thanked Metropolitan Nektarios for the opportunity for the Orthodox faithful of Tatarstan to venerate the holy relic.

That same day, Metropolitan Kirill of Kazan and Tatarstan met with members of the delegation of the Metropolis of Corfu at the Kazan Diocesan Administration. Metropolitan Kirill told the guests about the life of the Metropolis of Tatarstan, interreligious cooperation in implementing social projects and charitable initiatives, and the restoration of Orthodox holy sites with the support of the leadership of the Republic of Tatarstan. The head of the metropolis emphasized that the region carefully preserves the centuries-old peace and harmony among people of different nationalities and faiths.

On August 23, 2026, the 12th Sunday after Pentecost, a concelebrated hierarchical service was held at the Cathedral of the Kazan Icon of the Mother of God at the Kazan-Bogoroditsky Monastery. The Divine Liturgy was celebrated by Metropolitan Nektarios of Corfu, Paxos and the Diapontian Islands; Metropolitan Kirill of Kazan and Tatarstan; Bishop Methodius of Almetyevsk and Bugulma; Bishop Leonid of Argentina and South America; and Bishop Gabriel of Naberezhnye Chelny and Yelabuga.

At the conclusion of the service, Metropolitan Kirill awarded Metropolitan Nektarios the Medal of the Kazan Icon of the Mother of God, 1st Class. In recognition of his efforts in bringing the relics of St Spyridon, A.V. Karmakov was awarded the diocesan Medal of the Kazan Icon of the Mother of God, 2nd Class. P. Spiridonidis was awarded the Medal of St Gurias of Kazan, 2nd Class.

At the conclusion of the visit, Metropolitan Nektarios and those accompanying him visited the ancient churches of Kazan, after which they departed for Greece.

The relics of St Spyridon will remain in Russia until September 20, 2026.

