



Pilgrims from the Serbian Orthodox Church venerate holy sites of the St Petersburg Metropolis and Valaam Monastery



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From 7 to 17 of September 2026, a group of 35 pilgrims from the Serbian Patriarchate visited the St Petersburg Metropolis and the Transfiguration of the Saviour Valaam Stavropegic Monastery for Men. The group included clergy of the Zvornik-Tuzla Diocese: Archimandrite Simeon (Obrenović), Archpriests Dalibor Džekić, Siniša Maksimović and Jovan Maksimović, Protosyncellus Nebojša Tovirac, and Priest Jovan Tomić.

The visit was organised with the assistance of the Department for External Church Relations of the Moscow Patriarchate.

On the 8th of September, the guests visited the Holy Trinity Alexander Nevsky Lavra, where they venerated the relics of St Alexander Nevsky, looked around the monastery's landmarks accompanied by a guide, and honoured the memory of prominent figures buried within its grounds, including Metropolitan Vasily III of Montenegro (Petrović-Njegoš, 1709–1766) and diplomat Sava Vladislavić-

Raguzinsky (1669–1738), whose tomb is located in the monastery's Church of the Annunciation of the Most Holy Theotokos.

On the same day, the pilgrims visited St Peter and Paul Cathedral, where they viewed the imperial and grand-ducal burial vaults. On 9 September, they visited the sights of Peterhof and the Tsarskoye Selo Lyceum.

On 10 September, the guests from the Republic of Srpska arrived at the Transfiguration of the Saviour Valaam Stavropegic Monastery for Men. The clergy of the Zvornik-Tuzla Diocese had warm fraternal fellowship with the monastery's dean, Hieromonk Simeon (Kuznetsov), and took part in the Divine Liturgy celebrated at the Transfiguration Cathedral on the 11th of September, the Feast of the Beheading of St John the Baptist, and on the 12th of September 2026.

During their stay on Valaam from 10 to 12 of September, the Serbian pilgrims visited the St Nicholas, St John the Baptist, Gethsemane, Resurrection and Kazan Sketes, as well as the site of the hermitage of Abbot Nazarius. They also visited the Abbot's, Old and New Cemeteries, prayed at the grave of the monastery's ever-memorable resident, Archimandrite Methodius (Petrov, 1961–2021), and attended a concert by the Valaam Monastery Choir.

On Sunday, the 13th of September, the clergy of the Zvornik-Tuzla Diocese concelebrated the Divine Liturgy with the rector of the Church of the Resurrection of Christ on Spilled Blood in St Petersburg, Archpriest Sergius Kuksevitch. The guests from the Republic of Srpska toured the church accompanied by a guide and sang "Memory Eternal" at the site where Emperor Alexander II was mortally wounded. On the same day, the Serbian pilgrims visited Kazan Cathedral and St Isaac's Cathedral.

On 14 September, the guests visited Kronstadt, where they toured the Naval Cathedral of St Nicholas and the memorial apartment museum of St John of Kronstadt. They also prayed at the saint's grave at the St John Convent on the Karpovka River and at the chapel of Blessed Xenia of St Petersburg at Smolensk Cemetery.

The following day, in Vyritsa, the pilgrims from the Republic of Srpska visited the churches of the Holy Apostles Peter and Paul and the Kazan Icon of the Mother of God. They also visited Tsarskoye Selo (the city of Pushkin), where they toured the Feodorovsky Sovereign Cathedral and other local landmarks.

During their stay in the St Petersburg Metropolis and on Valaam, the guests were accompanied by staff members of the Protocol Department of the St Petersburg Metropolis and the Pilgrimage Centre of the Moscow Patriarchate, as well as representatives of the Foundation for the Support of Christian Culture

and Heritage.

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