



Academic conference on inter-Orthodox relations takes place in Kazan Theological Seminary



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On 1st October 2026, the 3rd Berdnikov Readings were held at the Kazan Orthodox Theological Seminary in the format of the All-Russian Applied Research Conference entitled “Inter-Orthodox Relations – Topical Problems and Possible Canonical Ways to Address Them.” The meeting was chaired by Priest Nikita Kuznetsov, Rector of the Kazan Seminary.

Prior to the conference, a memorial service for a professor of the Kazan Theological Academy, I.S. Berdnikov (1839-1915), took place at the Seminary’s Church of St. John of Kronstadt. The Kazan Seminary holds annual readings in honour of Professor Berdnikov, an outstanding Russian theologian and canonist, and his students, who had made a great contribution to the development of church academic studies in Russia.

Presented to participants in the conference was an exhibition of books, photographs and personal documents of Professor Berdnikov and his students, as well as a joint monograph entitled “Church Law. Theory, History, Practice,” published under the general editorship of Archpriest Alexander Zadornov, Head of the Department of Practical Church Disciplines of the Moscow Theological Academy, and Ms Yu.V. Erokhina, Head of the Department of Theory and History of State and Law of the Law Faculty of the State Academic University for the Humanities.

Priest Nikita Kuznetsov, Rector of the Kazan Orthodox Theological Seminary, opened the conference by reading out a message of greetings from Metropolitan Kirill of Kazan and Tatarstan.

Taking part in the conference with the blessing of the Chairman of the Moscow Patriarchate’s Department for External Church Relations was Mr A.Yu. Khoshev, a member of staff of the DECR Secretariat for Inter-Orthodox Relations, Associate Professor of the Department of Church History and Ecclesiastical Law of the Saints Cyril and Methodius Theological Institute of Postgraduate Studies. During a plenary session, Mr Khoshev delivered an address entitled “Problem of Autocephaly and Search for Ways to Resolve It As Part of the Inter-Orthodox Process in the 20th and 21st centuries.”

The following addresses were also delivered during the conference: “Empire, Nation State and Territorial Principle in Inter-Orthodox Relations” by Archpriest Alexander Zadornov; “Crimes Against Religion and the Church As Encroachment on Russia’s State Sovereignty” by Yu.V. Erokhina; “The Role of Canonical Corpus of the Orthodox Church in Inter-Orthodox Relations” by N.S. Semenova, Head of the Department of Church History and Ecclesiastical Law of the Saints Cyril and Methodius Theological Institute of Postgraduate Studies; “Practical Aspects of Relations with Institutions of the Patriarchate of Alexandria in the Republic of South Africa on the Platform of St. Sergius Parish in Johannesburg from 1999 to 2021” by Archpriest Ioann Lapidus, Associate Professor of the Department of Practical Church Disciplines of the Moscow Theological Academy; and “Deliberations on the Autocephaly of the Georgian Church Within the Pre-Council Presence (1906): Interpretation and Contribution of I.S. Berdnikov” by A.Yu. Mikhaylov, Associate Professor of the Department of General and Church History of the Kazan Seminary. Among the speakers were also other scholars specializing in inter-Orthodox relations, church history, as well as the canon and international law.