Youth Group of St Nicholas Cathedral in Vienna visits the Bulgarian capital



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Fr om 30 October to 1 November, with the blessing of Bishop Alexei of Vienna and Austria, a youth group from St Nicholas Cathedral in Vienna, led by Priest George Ryashko, made a pilgrimage to Sofia.

On 30 October, the visitors explored the principal churches of the Bulgarian capital and learned about their history, architecture and holy objects. The pilgrims then travelled to Kremikovtsi Monastery, wh ere they were given a guided tour focusing on the monastery's history and spiritual heritage.

On 31 October, together with members of the youth association of the Metochion of the Patriarch of Moscow and All Rus' in Sofia, the visitors made a pilgrimage to Rila Monastery, one of Bulgaria's principal spiritual sanctuaries, the **Metochion's website** reports. During the tour, the pilgrims learned

about the monastery's history and the life and ascetic labours of its founder, St John of Rila. They also visited the monastery's main church and museum.

On 1 November, following the Divine Liturgy at the Metochion, the visitors met with His Holiness Daniel, Patriarch of Bulgaria, at the Sofia Metropolis building. The Primate of the Bulgarian Orthodox Church warmly welcomed the young pilgrims and emphasised the importance of fellowship among Orthodox youth.

During the meeting, Priest George Ryashko thanked His Holiness for the warm reception and presented him with a commemorative gift on behalf of all the pilgrims.

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