Primate of the Orthodox Church of Jerusalem visits the Intercession Convent in Moscow



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On 5 November 2026, His Beatitude Theophilos III, Patriarch of Jerusalem, who is in Russia on a **visit**, visited the Intercession Stavropegic Convent.

The Primate of the Orthodox Church of Jerusalem was accompanied by Metropolitan Anthony of Volokolamsk, Chairman of the Department for External Church Relations of the Moscow Patriarchate; Archpriest Nikolai Balashov, Advisor to His Holiness the Patriarch of Moscow and All Rus'; Archpriest Igor Yakimchuk, Deputy Chairman of the DECR; Mother Superior Theophania (Miskina), Abbess of the Intercession Convent; and Archdeacon Mark (Henderson), a clergyman of the Orthodox Church of Jerusalem.

His Beatitude Patriarch Theophilos celebrated a prayer service before the relics of Blessed Matrona of

Moscow and venerated the holy relics.

Mother Superior Theophania (Miskina) addressed the Primate of the Orthodox Church of Jerusalem with heartfelt words of welcome, saying: "Your Beatitude! It is a great joy and honour for us, with the blessing of His Holiness Kirill, Patriarch of Moscow and All Rus', to welcome you to the historic Intercession Convent in Moscow. With your arrival, it is as though the grace of the Holy City of Jerusalem, the place of the earthly life and Passion of our Lord Jesus Christ, has touched our convent and all the Russian land."

The Abbess of the Intercession Convent noted that 22 November would mark the 145th anniversary of the birth of the holy and blessed Matrona of Moscow, whose venerable relics rest at the convent. "Your Beatitude, it is deeply symbolic for us that this feast coincides with the anniversary of your Patriarchal enthronement," Mother Superior Theophania said.

As a token of prayerful remembrance of the visit, she presented Patriarch Theophilos with an icon of Blessed Matrona of Moscow, a set of prayer beads and a silver censer, adding: "We pray that Blessed Matrona may always strengthen and assist you in your demanding Patriarchal ministry in the Holy City of Jerusalem. We also ask for your holy prayers at the Tomb of the Lord."

In his response, the Primate of the Orthodox Church of Jerusalem emphasised how glad he was to pray before the relics of Blessed Matrona.

"For me personally, this is a deeply moving moment," His Beatitude said. "This is my second visit to your convent, and the icon of Blessed Matrona which you, Mother, presented to me during my first visit has always been kept in my cell."

His Beatitude Patriarch Theophilos went on to recount his personal veneration of Blessed Matrona:

"When I returned home from Moscow on that occasion, I found a letter on my desk. Inside was a sheet of paper on which the life of St Matrona had been written. At that time, I knew very little about her life. That letter became a special sign for me that she would be our protectress. We are greatly pleased to be here, and we give glory to the Triune God, Who, as the Psalmist says, works wonders through His saints. God's saints are a visible confirmation for us of the words of the Apostle Paul, who said that our homeland is in heaven and that the saints are citizens of this homeland."

"In the holy city of Jerusalem, at the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, we pray for the whole world and, of course, offer special prayers for our Orthodox brothers and sisters," His Beatitude continued. "In Jerusalem there is an empty tomb, a testimony to the Resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ, while here

before us, in the shrine, rest the relics of Blessed Matrona. This is a visible sign, a foretaste of our common resurrection. The principal task of our Church is to help us, through prayer and the sacraments of the Church, especially the Sacrament of the Holy Eucharist, attain spiritual purification and ultimately follow the path taken by St Matrona."

The Primate of the Orthodox Church of Jerusalem emphasised that the Church is called "to preserve the great gift that the Lord has bestowed upon us all, our holy Orthodox faith, and to keep it pure and unblemished, so that, in accordance with the Lord's words, we may be a light that shines before all".

"In our time, marked by so many difficulties and temptations, people are seeking this light, which purifies the soul," His Beatitude said.

Photos by the Press Service of the Intercession Stavropegic Convent

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