

THIRD DAY OF CELEBRATIONS IN RUSSIA – PRIMATIAL DIVINE LITURGY

On Wednesday the 11th/24th of July 2013 a Joint Service of Patriarchs took place on the occasion of the 1025th anniversary of Russian Christianization at the Church of the Saviour in central Moscow, which was erected on the site of the old church after the last regime change in Russia. The old church had been destroyed by the Communist regime to be used as a swimming pool.

The Joint Service was led by His All Holiness Cyril, Patriarch of Moscow and All Russia, and co-officiated by the Heads of the All-Holy Orthodox Churches, His Beatitude Theodoros, Patriarch of Alexandria; His Beatitude Theophilos, Our Father and Patriarch of Jerusalem; His Beatitude Irinej, Patriarch of Serbia; His Beatitude Neophytos, Patriarch of Bulgaria; His Beatitude Elias, Patriarch of Georgia, His Beatitude Chrysostomos, Archbishop of Cyprus, and His Beatitude Savvas, Metropolitan of Warsaw and All Poland. Participating in the liturgy were also prelates and priests representing the Churches of the Patriarchate of Constantinople, the Patriarchate of Antioch, the Patriarchate of Romania, the Church of Greece, the Church of Albania, and the Head of the Russian Church of the OCA (Orthodox Church in America), Archbishop Tychon.

In order based on the Diptychs of the Orthodox Church, the bloodless sacrifice was reenacted in Pan-Orthodox participation and unity, giving thanks to God for the incorporation, 1025 years ago, of the whole of the Russian people to the Body of the Orthodox Church by means of the baptism of their king, St Vladimir, and St Olga.

Thousands of faithful Russians attended the divine Liturgy in devoutness and absolute order. These arrived both for the celebrations of their Church, but also in order to venerate the Holy Cross of the glorious Apostle Andrew the First-Called from the Metropolis of Patras, waiting for their turn with piety and patience.

At the end of the D. Liturgy, His Beatitude Theodoros, the Patriarch of Alexandria, talked of the event of the 1025th anniversary of Russian Christianization, whereas a message by President Putin was read by a presidential representative.

After the divine Liturgy, lunch was held in a large, beautiful hall beneath the Church. During lunch, each of the Heads of the Orthodox Churches briefly addressed the Patriarch of Moscow, underlining the importance of the Baptism of Rus and of the celebration of its 1025th anniversary to the Russian people and the entire Church, and also extending thanks for having been invited to participate therein. In his reply, His All-Holiness Cyril, the Patriarch of Moscow and All-Russia, emphasized the renaissance taking place within the Church of Russia during the last twenty years, and requested the help of God and Orthodox Churches for the completion of this God-pleasing work.

From the Secretariat-General

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