



His Holiness Patriarch Kirill officiates at the foundation stone ceremony for the Church of the Elevation of the Precious and Life-Giving Cross of the Lord in Yerevan

On 18 March 2010, His Holiness Patriarch Kirill of Moscow and All Russia on an official visit to Armenia officiated at the laying of the foundation stone of an Orthodox Church of the Elevation of the Precious and Life-Giving Cross of the Lord to be built in Shengavit district of the Armenian capital city.

Present at the service were the Supreme Patriarch and Catholicos of All Armenians Karekin II and hierarchs of the Armenian Apostolic Church; members of the official delegation of the Russian Orthodox Church, including Metropolitan Hilarion, chairman of the Moscow Patriarchate Department for external church relations; abbot of the Laura of the Holy Trinity and St. Sergius Archbishop Feognost of Sergiev Posad; head of the Moscow Patriarchate administrative secretariat Bishop Sergiy of Solnechnogorsk; chairman of the Synodal Information department V. Legoida; DECR deputy chairman hegumen Philipp (Ryabykh), as well as the rector of the Russian Orthodox church of the Intercession of the Mother of God archpriest Arseny Grigorian; Russian Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary to Armenia V. Kovalenko and staff members of the Russian Embassy; the first deputy mayor of Yerevan Taron Markarian; chairman of the Union of Armenians of Russia Ara Abramian; and Orthodox residents of Yerevan.

The Primate of the Russian Orthodox Church read out the certificate of the laying of the church.

After the service, His Holiness Patriarch Kirill welcomed those present and said that a representation of the Russian Orthodox Church would be opened at the Church of the Precious and Life-Giving Cross of the Lord.

"The decision to build a Russian Orthodox church in Yerevan and of an Armenian church in Moscow was made by His Holiness Patriarch Alexy II of the blessed memory and by Your Holiness," Patriarch Kirill said addressing the Catholicos of All Armenians. "It is remarkable that both churches are dedicated to our common holy object – the Precious and Life-Giving Cross of the Lord. Many carved stone crosses, named khachkars, bear witness to the veneration of the cross in Armenia from the earliest times."

Catholicos of All Armenians Karekin II greeted His Holiness Patriarch Kirill and all those present at the divine service.

"A new holy object will be built at this beautiful place and gather under its vaults that give blessing and grace not only Russians, but also Ukrainians, Byelorussians, Greeks, and other Orthodox believers, the Primate of the Armenian Apostolic Church said. "Our churches built in the Armenian and Russian land symbolize the centuries-long friendship between our two nations marked by the spirit of fraternal cooperation."

The Catholicos of All Armenians Karekin II told the Armenian Orthodox believers: "We offer up prayers to God in Heavens asking Him to multiply your good undertakings for the good of the Church, to remain faithful children of the Russian Orthodox Church and worthy citizens of the Republic of Armenia."

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