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Archbishop Irénée participates in celebrations in Ekaterinburg, Moscow



During the last week of June and first week of July 2019, His Eminence, Archbishop Irénée of Ottawa and Canada was on pilgrimage to Russia, where he visited Ekaterinburg and the Moscow region. He was accompanied by Archpriest Daniel Andrejuk, Representative of the Orthodox Church in America to the Russian Orthodox Church and Dean of the OCA's Representation Church of the Great Martyr Catherine, Moscow, and Protodeacon Jesse Isaac.



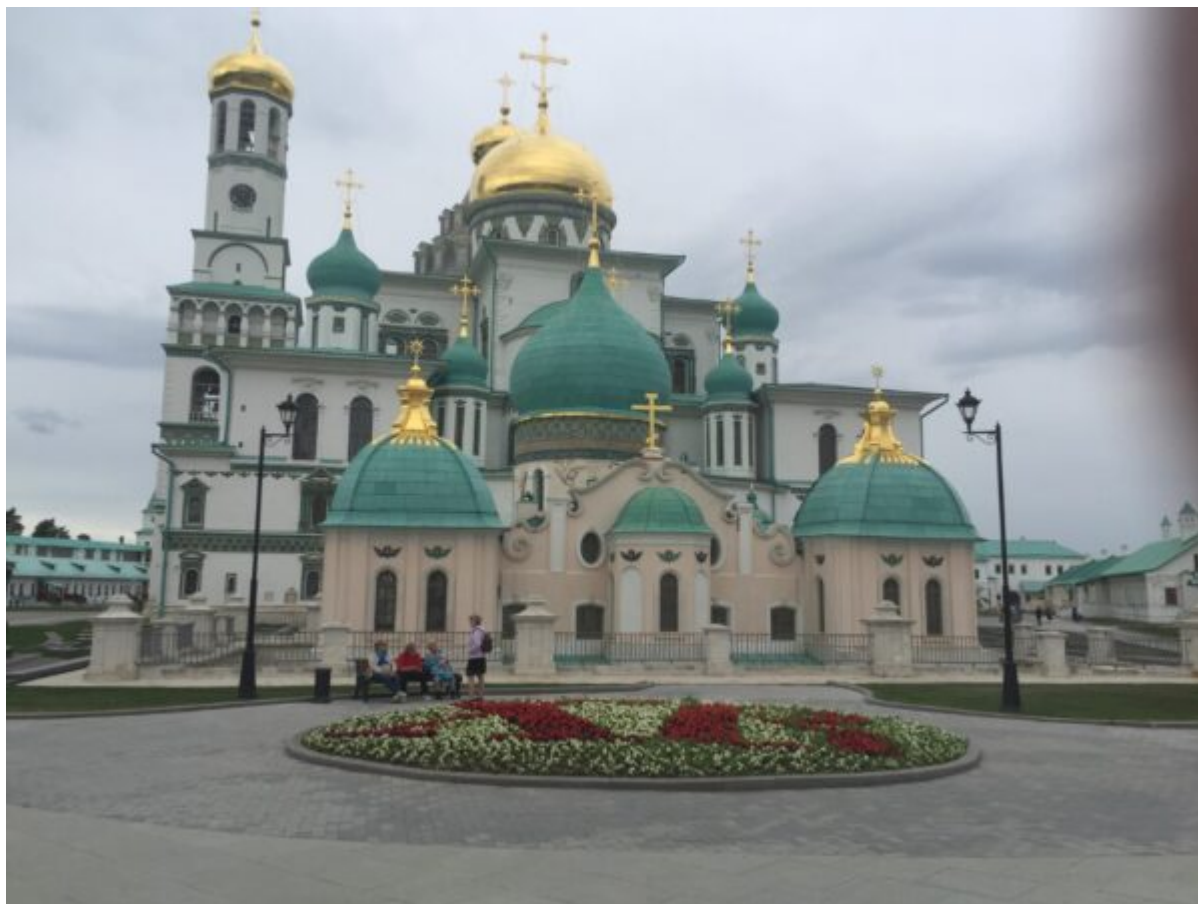
Archbishop Irénée was welcomed at the Ekaterinburg airport on Friday, July 28, by His Eminence, Metropolitan Kirill of Ekaterinburg, after which they visited Ganina Yama, the place where the remains of Tsar Nicholas II and his family were burned and buried. The following afternoon, they traveled to Alapayevsk, where they were greeted by His Grace, Bishop Leonid and celebrated Vigil. It was in Alapayevsk that the New Martyr Elizabeth and the Nun Barbara were martyred.



On Sunday, June 30—the Feast of All Saints Glorified in the Russian Lands—Archbishop Irénée concelebrated the Divine Liturgy with Metropolitan Kirill and His Grace, Bishop Alexei of Serov at Ekaterinburg’s Church on the Blood, which marks the site of the martyrdom of Tsar Nicholas II and his family. At the conclusion of the Liturgy, Metropolitan Kirill offered Archbishop Irénée and the OCA delegation a warm welcome and presented an icon of the Royal Family. Archbishop Irénée in turn thanked Metropolitan Kirill for the invitation and his hospitality, recalling the connection between many of the North American saints and Russia while presenting an icon of Saint Herman of Alaska to the Metropolitan.



On July 1 and 2, the Feast of Saint John (Maximovich) of Shanghai and San Francisco was celebrated by Archbishop Irénée, Father Daniel, and the clergy of the Representation Church of the Great Martyr Catherine in Moscow. During the Vigil, the Akathistos to Saint John was sung. Archbishop Irénée presented an icon of Saints John and Catherine to the parish. The following morning, the festal Divine Liturgy was celebrated by Archbishop Irénée and Father Daniel. Among the concelebrants were representatives of a number of the Local Orthodox Churches, including Archimandrite Seraphim (Shemyatovsky), Representative of the Orthodox Church of the Czech Lands and Slovakia; Archpriest Kakhaber Gogotishvili, Representative of the Georgian Orthodox Church; Hieromonk Iriney (Pikovsky), Representative of the Sretensky Monastery; Hieromonk Alexander (Galushka), Secretary of the Church of Saint Nicholas in Kotelniki, the Representation Church of the Church of the Czech Lands and Slovakia; and the clergy of Saint Catherine's Church. In attendance at the Liturgy was the Charge d'Affairs of Canada to Russia, Mr. Stefan Jobin, who received a warm welcome from Father Daniel.



Of particular note was the veneration of a belt from the vestments of Saint John, which had been brought to Saint Catherine's in early May with the blessing of Archbishop Irénée, who is the guardian of the belt. The belt will remain through mid-August at Saint Catherine Church, where daily akathistos hymns are celebrated.



At the conclusion of the Divine Liturgy, Charge d’Affairs Jobin said that it is a great honor for him to attend the festal services as a representative of Canada. He went on to say that he appreciates the relationship with the Church of Saint Catherine and expressed thanks for the invitation to participate in the celebration. In response, Archbishop Irénée expressed his hope that Saint John would continue his intercession and prayers for all present.

Before his return to Canada on July 4, Archbishop Irénée also visited the New Jerusalem Monastery, the Sretensky Monastery and Seminary in Moscow, and other ecclesiastical sites.

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