

## Pilgrims visit only Greek Orthodox church in Rome

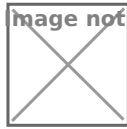


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Before departing from Rome, Orthodox and Catholic faithful participating in the “From Rome to New Rome” pilgrimage made one last stop in the City of Seven Hills: Orthodox Church of Saint Theodore at the Palatine Hill, the only Greek Orthodox parish in the city. Originally built in the 6th century, the church was given to the Greek Orthodox community in Rome by Pope John Paul II.

Parish priest Fr. Symeon Katsinas welcomed His Eminence Archbishop Elpidophoros of America, His Eminence Cardinal Tobin, and the faithful to the parish. Notably, Fr. Symeon completed his doctoral work under Archbishop Elpidophoros. Cardinal Tobin and Fr. Symeon explained the history of the church, which is situated in a particularly significant part of the city: directly below the church lies the legendary birthplace of Roman founders Romulus and Remus.

The church still contains its 6th-century apse mosaic, which is remarkably similar to that of the Basilica of San Vitale in Ravenna (best known for its sanctuary mosaics of Sts. Justinian and Theodora, also dating to the 6th century): both picture Christ seated upon a globe with two figures to each of his sides; in this case, Christ is accompanied by Sts. Peter and Paul as well as two martyrs, Sts. Theodore and Cleonikos.



After visiting the Church of San Teodoro al Palatino, the pilgrims traveled to Istanbul, Türkiye, where they will complete the second leg of the ten-day historic pilgrimage at the Ecumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople.

Photo by Orthodox Observer/Brittainy Newman

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